Local Government SERVICE

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Croydon Report

The Croydon typhoid epidemic and the report of the nquiry Tribunal have many lessons for local authorities nd their officers which, we are confident, will receive he close attention they demand. For ourselves we would stress one point only which has received wide attention in the Press—the reference to "misunderstanding and lack of communication between the responsible officers of the Corporation."

Adequate communication and co-ordination of activity between the executive officers of different departments is one of the major problems in the administration of any big undertaking. In local government it presents particular difficulties. The work of departments covers so wide a range, so much of it naturally devolves along separate tracks, that busy officers can readily slip into the habit of looking upon their work as an end in itself, unrelated to that of the authority as a whole. That is an attitude damaging alike to the official, to the authority, and, as Croydon's unhappy experience shows, to the community they serve.

But it would be grossly unfair to assume, as some writers in the Press appear to have done, that, in the words of one, this "tragic inco-ordination" prevails "throughout practically the whole range of our publicly administered social services." In the majority of local authorities, the biggest as well as the smallest, the officials, as our readers well know, work in the closest possible collaboration one with another. It is one of the constant aims of N.A.L.G.O. to encourage in each official, whatever his grade, the broadest view of his job—the administrative outlook rather than the departmental—and to foster the closest co-operation, in ideals, as in activity, between them. "We are members one of another" must always be the motto of workers in public administration.

But the greatest lesson of the Croydon misadventure is, we feel, generally recognised. It has been well expressed by the leader-writer of the "Daily Telegraph." "This Croydon experience," he writes, "throws into relief the thoroughness with which the water supplies of our cities are now regulated, for the epidemic at Croydon has seemed formidable because of the very rarity of such outbreaks."

* * *

Local Government Finance

In his annual speech as chairman of Lloyds Bank, Lord Wardington drew attention to the increase in local government borrowings and rates. He went on to say (and obviously to deplore) that economy had come to mean wise spending, and added that "wise spending, from the local government point of view, often meant expenditure on what happened to be the current fashion."

Since he gave no instances of the expenditure he considered merely fashionable, he eludes reply. In any event it is not the exclusive responsibility of the "local government point of view" to justify the increases he refers to. The general level of borrowings is, as he acknowledges, the concern of the Central Government. The Treasury, apparently not so concerned as he, has not as yet "put on the screw"; and no other Bank Chairman expressed similar concern in contemporaneous speeches.

As to rates, local authorities have felt concern for some time—chiefly over commitments urged upon them by the Government or attributable to national causes beyond local control, both kinds casting new burdens on the rates and stinting the ratepayers in the provision of local amenities. Not failing in a comprehensive reference, Lord Wardington remarked that the quinquennial valuation seemed always to produce a higher assessment and never a lower. If it does so in 1939, here again, in view of the policy of the Central

Valuation Committee in regard to assessment of pre-War houses, it is a central body which should, and no doubt can, provide an explanation.

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Economic Municipal Enterprise

Acknowledging, as he could hardly fail to do, that much of local authority debt is described as remunerative, Lord Wardington saw fit to add a comment which neither local authorities nor their officers can afford to let pass: "One cannot help feeling that such enterprises would be more productive in private hands." Both councillors and officers may protest against this view without taking sides in the general issue of Public v. Private Enterprise. Almost without exception they believe that the utility enterprises which are in local authority control are both more productive and more economic as a consequence; though this belief commits none of them to a view that industry and commerce at large should be "socialised."

The intrinsic advantages of municipal control in this sphere are susceptible of clear definition and could be fully catalogued here if space permitted. It is, however, sufficient to appeal to results. In the two cases where a comparison can be made over a long period on authoritative analyses of costs, Field's "Analysis of Gas Undertakings" and the "Electrical Times" Tables of Results show the municipalities to have consistently achieved lower capital and working costs, lower prices, and greater consumption per unit of capital.

It may interest Lord Wardington to know that the major factors in these results have been the municipalities' lower interest rate—itself a proof of that security of local credit which Lord Wardington, unlike the investor, appears to doubt—and the strict regimen imposed upon the municipalities in the redemption of debt.

* * *

"Anti-Graft Crusade"

A cordial relationship between the local government officer and the Press is an essential condition of efficient administration. Each is dependent upon the other—the officer on the Press as the best means of contact between him and the public he serves, and the Press on the officer as the source of a high proportion of its news. Any action from either side likely to prejudice that relationship will do damage to the interests of both. An example of such action is the recent series of articles in the "Sunday Pictorial" alleging widespread graft and corruption in the local government service.

The attitude of N.A.L.G.O. to these evils has been stated more than once. While ever determined to defend the honour of the Service, it is not concerned to hide or whitewash abuses that can be shown to exist. On the contrary, it seeks to expose such abuses, holding that only by the most searching investigation and the most drastic treatment of evils brought to light can the honour of local government officers as a class be maintained.

But the "investigation" conducted by the "Sunday Pictorial" has served no such purpose. Many allegations have been made, all of them sweeping, anonymous, and unproven. The complaints of the disgruntled have been accepted and published, apparently without the slightest check upon their accuracy. And upon this flimsy evidence has been based an attack upon the local government officer and the local government Service as violent as it is unwarranted. That the so-called investigation was no more than a newspaper "stunt" of the worst type is shown by the fact that when N.A.L.G.O. challenged the author of the articles to provide it with evidence of examples of corruption which it might itself bring before the courts, not a single case was submitted.

We do not deny that graft and corruption exist in local government, as they do in every other large organisation. But we do claim, and we believe with justice, that such evils are remarkably rare and that local government officers observe standards of honour and integrity no lower, and possibly higher, than do the members of any other professional group in the country. And we contend that to impugn those standards by the methods of the anonymous letter-writer, attacking men and women who cannot defend themselves, is neither "crusading" nor good journalism.

* * *

British Road Policy

The visit of a British Roads Delegation to Germany in the latter part of 1937, followed by the more recent tour by the Minister of Transport, may have far-reaching effects upon the work of road engineers in the local government service in this country. Opinion here is strengthening in favour of the adoption of national motor-ways similar to, but not a copy of, the German system. Despite ceaseless consideration, legislation and experiment we have seen no real abatement in the toll of death and injuries on the roads.

Statistics suggest that fewer than 1 per cent of accidents are primarily due to road defects and that in only 3 per cent are road defects a contributory cause. On the other hand, the valuable report on Fatal Accidents in Oxfordshire over four years, issued last August, suggests that 76 per cent of the accidents investigated would not have taken place had the roads at the places concerned been of the type and form recommended in the Ministry's Memorandum on the Layout and Construction of Roads. If the Oxfordshire view is generally accepted there is a clear case for the adoption of a policy of real road improvement, with the possible construction of entirely new roads retained for through motor vehicle traffic only, as is the case in Germany.

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Pour Encourager Les Autres

Many branches of the Association have made special efforts to respond to the appeal for more generous support of the B. & O. Fund; the activities of some of them are mentioned in our branch reports this month. But the example of two deserves special mention. Nottingham and District Branch has agreed to hand over to the national fund £171 8s. 5d. from its branch funds, and West Riding Branch has undertaken to meet itself the cost of all its own cases for 24 weeks from January 8, returning the cheque for £59 15s. sent from headquarters for the current quarter.

Last year the expenditure of the B. & O. Fund exceeded income by nearly £4,000. We hope that these examples will stimulate other branches to similar sacrifices in accordance with their financial capacities.

What We Think

The Administrator in a Planned Society

SIR JOSIAH STAMP'S address on "The Administrator and a Planned Society," delivered to the Institute of Public Administration in inauguration of his office as the institute's third president, traversed so many fields of study and interest, and traversed them with outlook so fresh and in manner so forthright, that it is no surprise to see comment still continue.

With the full text before us, we take an opportunity our readers would not have us miss of noticing Sir Josiah's address in our own columns, at the same time acknowledging how inadequate any such notice must be. The bare fact that one of Sir Josiah's eminence has treated a subject which, so far from being of less, is probably of more concern to the local government officer than to the statesmen, economists, entrepreneurs, and civil servants whose interests are also engaged, is, in itself, ample warrant for the comment that only close and continuing study by our members can do justice to an address such as this. In deciding, as we hope they will, to accord it such a response, members may do so the more readily when they recollect the penetrating understanding of local government which Sir Josiah has always possessed, and the friendliness he has always shown to local government officers and this Association.

The primary questions Sir Josiah dealt with in his address were two: what will be the essential character of the administrator's task in the immediate future; and what kind of administrator will that task call for?

Governmental Changes

There is, however, a question anterior to the first. The administrator's task can only reflect the task of government in all its implications. Sir Josiah first addressed himself, therefore, to the task of government, and after reviewing its expanding scope and the changes which had come over the character of its fundamental objects, had no difficulty in postulating that the next forty years will bring us to a semi-planned society. In accepting this postulate he was not necessarily expressing himself as in favour of extensions of authoritarian control, but was "merely carrying to their logical conclusions the newer forces now at work in this and similarly situated countries."

Since the characteristic of an individualistic community is its dependence upon a price system, and this system must lose its integrity as society approaches progressively towards complete planning, the essential problem in a planned or semi-planned society is to know what can be substituted for a price mechanism, and how the substitute must be applied. The success of control or regulation in one sphere cannot be finally estimated until its effects on the unplanned sphere are ascertained. In such a society the government's real task is to maximise social utility—so to adjust both spheres of activity as to secure the maximum social net product.

The task of administration will be to subserve that end, and the knowledge, experience, and type of mind and ability which the administrator must have must be such as to equip him for that essential purpose. The best administrator will, in Sir Josiah's clinching phrase, be the best maximiser.

One comment Sir Josiah made on this situation has drawn a heavy fire: "I am quite clear that the official must be the mainspring of the new society, suggesting, promoting, advising at every stage. The time when the amateur control is all-wise for either seeing or saying what ought to be done, and the official's job is merely to do what he is told, is now completely past. . . . Only the skilled and trained official can really be relied upon to keep continuity, system, impartial interpretation, tradition, and disinterested impetus."

Those who have criticised Sir Josiah's view have omitted to notice that his view implies no disruption of ultimate control. In point of fact the official's functions already move within the ambit Sir Josiah envisages, both in central and in local government.

The Ideal Official

As to the type of administrator called for, Sir Josiah indicated two classes of people as at once unsuitable: firstly, the push-and-go business man of the single-management type; and, secondly, the exactly trained civil servant elaborating and applying (by principle and precedent) a statutory and static programme; and co-operating with others similarly bound.

It is a striking fact that the type of officer approximating most closely to his ideal at present is the local government officer. The municipal chief has executive and professional, as well as administrative functions, and the combination cannot but develop that initiative and creative outlook which Sir Josiah welcomes. His duties inevitably take him through a cross-section of society, and he is bound to study the interrelation and reactions of public and private spheres. As a "field worker" he must grapple with human as well as purely economic and administrative elements in almost every problem which comes before him, and the day when he lacked in broad education of the higher type is, thanks largely to the efforts of our own Association, fast passing.

Juniors in the service need not think Sir Josiah's theme remote from their interests, for it is certain that if his expectations are fulfilled, the vista before the service must widen enormously. In an expanded sphere the Association's policy of providing a ladder for the junior, in training, education and opportunity, may well lead many a junior of to-day to heights not even within the contemplation, still less within the reach, of his senior of to-day.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE

The Editor can accept no responsibility for opinions expressed by contributors or correspondents. Contributions are invited of articles, sketches, jokes and verses of local government interest, and payment will be made for all matter, other than correspondence and branch reports, accepted. MSS. must be written or typed on one side of the paper only, and must be accompanied by the name and address of the author, not necessarily for publication. All material for the April issue must reach the Editor at 24 Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1, not later than March 16.

Things to Come

2. Making the Library a People's University

By a City Librarian

THE Public Libraries Act of 1919, by removing the rate limitation which had severely handicapped the work of smaller authorities and by extending the Libraries Act to County Councils, did much to advance the library movement. These were necessary and welcome reforms. Unfortunately, the Act placed libraries established by it under the control of the Education Authority, and thus introduced a principle which was hotly contested at the time and which to-day is repugnant to the majority of library authorities and librarians. The existence of two types of library government is not good for the movement; it encourages separatist tendencies and complicates the work of the representative body in many ways.

The effect of this dual form of control would probably not have been so marked but for the re-grouping of population caused by the development of motor transport and industrial, economic and social changes since the war. Some of the county systems—particularly in the home counties and in industrial counties like Lancashire and the West Riding—now rival the great city systems in size and importance. But their outlook and their methods differ, first because administrative problems are not the same, and secondly, because the work of the county libraries in most cases is subordinate to the requirements of the educational system. These differences make it difficult for municipal and county librarians to agree on many important aspects of library policy.

The creation of an agreed and suitable form of control is the major administrative problem now facing the library service. It is doubtful whether a solution will be found by merely adopting for all libraries one of the two methods of government now in use. More radical reforms are needed. The Carnegie Trustees have issued convincing data showing how difficult it is for small urban authorities to provide good library services unless they are prepared to levy heavy library rates. On the other hand, there are strips of county territory containing pools of population on the fringes of cities and towns which have efficient library services, and these county areas could obviously be better served from those towns than from a distant county centre.

Regional Control the Solution?

The growth of regional organisations for certain local services, and the recent Tyneside proposals, show that a form of regional government, probably based on the highly organised services already provided by towns which are the natural centres of these areas, and extending over districts linked together by industrial, social and geographical conditions, is the "shape of things to come" in the local government of the future. It is an axiom of library book economics that the more concentrated the population, the more efficient the service can be; and the large book pools and expert staffs available in these highly organised centres could give an excellent service to the surrounding population. Administrative Regional Library systems based on centres which already offer a metropolitan service in shops, amusements, art galleries and museums, technical schools, universities, etc.—and in library facilities such as reference, commercial, technical, patents, and the regional book exchanges—seem to offer the best solutions of library problems in the highly urbanised parts of the country.

The future of the library movement generally, however, must depend on the way in which librarians face up to their domestic problems and, more particularly, the extent of the success they can achieve in putting forward the claims of libraries to a more prominent position in municipal and national affairs. It is a curious fact that though public libraries were first looked upon as the most important form of education for the mass of the people, they are still denied the means of giving anything approaching a reasonable book service.

An Olympian looking down on the world of education might be excused an incredulous smile when he sees how irrational our efforts are. He would notice a vast outpouring of money and effort in training children to read and think, the majority to the age of 14, some to 16, and a select few to 21 or 22, and he would be astonished at the inadequacy of the attempts to make that expenditure profitable by giving the adult mind, so carefully and expensively trained, the opportunity of using that training. He would be forced to conclude that human affairs are based on the assumption that the intellects of the majority of children atrophy at the age of 16, and would probably wonder why in that case such trouble was taken to develop them at all.

Libraries Impoverished and Out of Date

Public libraries have been, and still are, denied money and opportunity. A brief examination of certain of the better known public libraries will make this clear. Croydon, for instance, a prosperous borough with a long library tradition, can find no better home for its Central Library than a portion of the Town Hall. The great city of Leeds is in a similar plight. Great masses of population are being re-grouped around the towns; they are given schools, churches, shops and community centres; but not always libraries. Last year the following sums were spent on books in certain towns:

	Population	Expenditure
Birmingham	1,002,413	£15,206
Liverpool	867,110	£11,994
Manchester	776,028	£12,855
Leeds	487,200	£8,102
Sheffield	518,200	£6,023

Book services sufficient for present-day needs cannot be provided by the expenditures shown above, which are relics of the days when library book stocks were static. They make no allowance for the greatly increased pace of research and discovery, the extension of social and intellectual horizons, and the spread of education.

It is safe to say that if a teacher were proved to be so ill-informed that he was consistently imparting out-of-date information, he would be dismissed. Yet libraries contain thousands of false teachers in out-of-date sociological, scientific, technical, and other classes of factual books, and few library committees appear to be aware of their grave responsibility in the matter.

The poverty of libraries in live books is a direct result of the general acceptance of the idea that books are luxuries. Librarians cannot escape responsibility for the persistence

f this idea or for their ineffectiveness as an organised rofessional body. At conference after conference ibrarians talk of books and mean literature. What little ublicity the Library Association undertakes is vitiated by ts almost exclusive insistence on the cultural aspect of the vork of libraries. None can doubt its importance, but it is by no means the library's whole work to-day.

One rarely hears a claim made for the public library as the only place where fact can be obtained ; where vocational and practical books are in heavy demand ; where the minds of readers who are not necessarily interested in the arts and literature are developed. An intelligently planned and actively conducted national publicity campaign for libraries, based on the need for the use of books as tools in every aspect of civilised life, should be one of the first steps taken by the Library Association. But such a campaign can only come when the Library Association has thought out a coherent library policy. Up to the present it appears to have no policy at all.

It seems clear that active libraries will tend less and less to make great collections of books. Scholarship of the orthodox type is steadily disappearing. Some may regret its passing, but the pace of world events is too much for it. Great reference libraries with large stocks of books awaiting the scholar who yearly comes in less numbers, will not be needed in the future.

Several factors affect this form of library service. In the first place, study has become too specialised, too complex, for the layman. The self-taught scholar of the past is now rare. The provincial Universities are largely concerned with vocational training ; their libraries take over the young student, who rarely uses books once he has qualified professionally ; the spread of the population makes it physically difficult and psychologically unattractive for many adult students engaged in leisure study to return to city centres in the evenings ; and the growth of the National Central Library helps to relieve reference libraries from attempts to collect all sorts of books.

It would seem desirable, therefore, for the great reference libraries to have only a limited number of books which cannot be lent, and to free the remainder for home reading if desired. It is probable, too, that under the new conditions, English libraries will find it preferable to adopt the Division system of American libraries, and mix reference and home reading books together in certain important departments of knowledge, with specialised staff to control them. On the other hand, the all-pervading radio is driving many young people to the library to study. Accommodation for young students will therefore probably be increased, and, though an extensive book stock may not be necessary, there will be a demand for the duplication of text books.

Librarians Must be Specialists

It is difficult to prophesy how far the growth in the number and efficiency of professional and trade technical libraries provided by organised bodies, which also give specialist information to their members, will affect the work public libraries are already doing in these fields. It is probable that public library reference work of all types will generally concern itself with guidance in sources rather than with the provision of large numbers of books. As the layman becomes more and more bewildered by the profusion of printed matter, the librarian must organise knowledge from books instead of collecting books. Reference library staffs will therefore include more book specialists trained in analysis and abstracting, and indexing on an immense scale will be necessary. If the library becomes more selective, regional book repositories will be needed for lesser-used books. In the future, there may be several Regional Central Libraries, financed partly by government grants and partly by levies based on borrowings.

The main work of the public library must be concerned with the general reader and book user, and how far that work will continue and expand will depend on political and educational developments. The library, as an instrument of democracy, as the necessary adult counterpart of the system of education, can survive only if it is still held to be possible for the majority of people to acquire sufficient knowledge and judgment to allow them to express opinions on matters of national and international concern. Recent events seem to suggest that this belief is not so firmly held to-day as in the past. " Book learning " is suspect, and the emphasis in formal education is on vocational training and physical needs. This phase may pass and a rational system of mental training may be introduced of which the right use of books would be an integral part. In these circumstances, the library service would naturally re-adjust its methods to the new conditions. Its book stocks would be more intensive in the sense that the range would be narrowed, but the efficiency (that is, the ability to supply repetitive demand) increased ; and its work would be purposive rather than passive.

If educationists can keep the minds of young people alert after school life, the consequent spread of adult education would allow the library to link its work with all forms of mental activity by means of book loan services on a vast scale. The mechanical routine would be done by partly trained assistants and the library staff proper would include persons trained for adult education work who would be able to simplify, analyse, and synthesize thought and ideas from books. The library itself would revert to its old position as the people's university, with halls for lectures and discussions, and with organised knowledge from books available on a scale hitherto unknown.

More Rational Training Needed

If librarianship develops on the lines suggested in this article, the need for a rational system of professional education and registration for librarians will become urgent. The existence of two bodies of examiners and two methods of training creates absurd anomalies and silly jealousies. Neither is wholly satisfactory. Public librarianship calls for qualities which are only rarely developed by a purely academic education. On the other hand, the system, sponsored by the Library Association in its examinations, which is based on the methods adopted in many other professions, cannot be altogether suitable for work which demands qualities of mind beyond the requirements of most professions.

Library Schools in various centres, linked up with the Universities, but controlled by the professional body, and including a good proportion of practising librarians as lecturers may be advisable. Such schools should provide students with regular practical training in efficient libraries, and too much emphasis should not be laid on academic acceptances. Whatever qualification is decided on as the standard for librarianship, it should rank with, and be as exclusive as, those of other professions.

Politically, the library service is bound up with the democratic system. If the attempt to train an educated democracy has to be abandoned, and " acceptance " agencies such as the radio and the primitive aid of pictures are used merely for the regimentation of the multitude, rational thought and the reasoning and reflection that go with intelligent reading will disappear. The library can have no place in a civilisation in which authority supersedes reason. A totalitarian state and a public library service on anything like present lines are mutually incompatible.

BOOKS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In furtherance of its desire to increase knowledge and understanding of local government, the Association, in collaboration with the National Book Council, has prepared a list of 138 books on public administration. The list is designed as a guide to reading for those interested in the subject, and, while in no sense exhaustive, will be of great value to students.

It is divided into eight sections, covering local government as a whole and in its various departments, including public health, housing and town planning, highways, education, public assistance finance, and municipal trading. All the books have been selected by experts in each field concerned. Copies of the list have been circulated to branch secretaries.

An "Underdog" Growls at the N.E.C.—

Complaint of Divided Loyalties and Neglect of the "Little Man"

By GEORGE MELL

THE complaint that youth to-day is apathetic and is reluctant to assume responsibility is no new one. It is regularly trumpeted forth by diehards in trade unions and social and professional associations—usually members whose mildewed age and firm grip on office invalidates the plea.

No one desires grave decisions and difficult negotiations to be entrusted to irresponsible youth. But when tenure of office tends to become the quasi-monopoly of older members, who are elected year in year out, naturally younger aspirants are discouraged by the apparent lack of desire for new blood. Many a spark of awakening enthusiasm has been extinguished by this wet blanket of comfortable middle age and its concomitant absence of initiative.

This is no less true of N.A.L.G.O. than of similar organisations, except that serious faults inherent in the structure of N.A.L.G.O., make many criticisms of youth's disinclination to join in the work rebound to the detriment of those who made them.

For example, if the number of lower-paid members on the National Executive Council (there does not appear to be even one rank-and-filer) is typical of branch life, then leadership of N.A.L.G.O. is the prerogative of the comfortable minority, whose interests were well safeguarded when they raised themselves to their present prominent positions. Despite their undoubted good intentions, can we assume that they will fight the little man's case or see his point of view?

"A Foot in Each Camp"

Are not their relations with councils and chief officials such that they have a foot in each camp and, by the nature of their peculiar position, must avow dual loyalty to employer and employee? Is it to be expected that responsible officers, working in close co-operation with those who formulate municipal policies, cannot but have their N.A.L.G.O. outlook, if not obscured, at least modified, by their opinion of the possible reaction created in the council chamber by a campaign for betterment of service and salary conditions?

There is no suggestion that any person deliberately abuses these relationships. But where a chief official or even a deputy in a prominent post is a local official of N.A.L.G.O. the situation is, to put it mildly, peculiar.

It is only comparable with the situation that would obtain in a trade union were a member, promoted to the rank of foreman, to continue to act on deputations from the men to the factory management. Where such changes do occur a definite transfer of loyalty is considered to have taken place, and the new foreman, while continuing union membership because of the benefits to which he is entitled, ceases to hold office or even to attend meetings.

Such situations arise within N.A.L.G.O., but how rarely does the person concerned realise the new implications of his post and discreetly retire? In the case of a factory foreman an alternative organisation catering exclusively for foremen's interests is open. For the N.A.L.G.O. member there is no such avenue of escape.

In N.A.L.G.O., however, we have the suspicion that senior members of staffs on our executives refrain from pushing ahead re-grading schemes, or give but lukewarm enthusiasm to projects which they know to be desirable, but which they fear may put the cat among the pigeons when the council is approached.

The word "suspicion" may seem harsh. But the thought that reasonable schemes have been emasculated by one's own members is not conducive to honeyed words. The people concerned have nothing to be ashamed of. It is their invidious position that strains their loyalties. The pity of it is that few of them pause to analyse their standpoint or, having done so, to seek a remedy.

Representation by Grades Urged

Attempts to remove senior members from office are fraught with danger, although this may be more imaginary than real. Few chief clerks or higher-grade men relish the prospect of counter-nomination from juniors, because of the criticism undoubtedly implied in such a course.

Nor do their colleagues always give the support they feel when voting is recorded on a sheet of paper which every voter is at liberty to examine at leisure. In small departments it has even been known for re-election to be taken for granted and for no election to the executive to take place, though this is in a large measure due to departmental apathy, which earns its own reward.

If a junior nominee becomes an executive member he is, in many cases, an isolated person fighting a lone battle for a not-too-popular cause. Where departmental chiefs are co-members with him the prospect of criticising their conduct to aggrieved juniors is hardly pleasant.

Again, how often is representation to conference made on a basis of grades? As often as not this honour is a perquisite of officialdom or long service. There is nothing wrong in that, but if the viewpoint of the masses is inadequately voiced it is small wonder that conference decisions are received apathetically and the annual report used to keep a decrepit wastepaper-basket on an even keel.

If these remarks are not unduly biased—and it is admitted that they are unlikely to apply as a whole to any one branch—then the reason for the recent complaints about lack of policy—on the cost of living, for example—is easily explained. The people responsible for our policy are less aware of the increased burden than the body of members who elected them.

The fact is, N.A.L.G.O.'s structure is such that the requirements of the poorly paid member find expression only through channels that are both few and narrow.

The remedy is some system whereby representation on a basis of grades replaces the existing one. Local alteration would lead to a reconstruction of district committees, and from there one could look to a different tendency on the National Executive.

If these criticisms result in counter-criticism and discussion, then their aim will have been attained. If the rank-and-file member can be encouraged to analyse his relationship with his association and see whether the men he elects can be expected to see eye to eye with him on vital matters, then there is hope that the present apathy will disappear. But until that is done we can hope for but little progress in improved service conditions.

—and a Member of the Council Replies

Seniors' Records that Give the Lie to Youthful Cynicism

By J. H. WARREN

THE older members enjoy no privileges whatsoever, not to speak of "a quasi-monopoly of office." If many of them attain office, it is by the votes of a body of members the majority of whom are under 40, and possibly under 35. The young who vote for the old have apparently a livelier imagination and sense of gratitude than Mr. Mell. They recognise in the old the young who joined the Association in face of the deterrents of 20 years ago, not in response to the inducements of to-day, and deem these veterans not incapable of serving it until they reach the decrepit age of 60 or 65.

In point of fact, there is no lack of "under thirties" on branch executives or district committees or among branch officers. The average age of members of the N.E.C. or officers of the district is no doubt higher, and short of constitutional provision for representation of age groups—an impracticable course which even Mr. Mell does not venture to suggest—this is inevitable; if only for the reason that, as Mr. Mell may eventually discover, it takes some years for a candidate to become known to the thousands who comprise his constituents.

Leadership is also, he goes on to say (in the phraseology of the class war), "the prerogative of the comfortable minority." No such prerogative exists. The chief officers, or seniors of their class, who attain office are as dependent on the suffrages of juniors and subordinates as the merely old are on the suffrages of the young. The real thoughts of Mr Mell about chief officers who hold office are disclosed later, when he speaks of them as having a foot in both camps and asks whether the rank and file can be sure that they will fight the little man's case. In view of the tests to which chief officers submit themselves by active participation in N.A.L.G.O.—tests external to the Association as well as internal—we must conclude that Mr. Mell takes a Hobbesian estimate of human nature and believes that there is no man alive who will put principle before interest. The merely old will humorously recognise in this belief an instance of that excessive cynicism which is a characteristic as frequently met with in certain types of youth as hero-worship is in others. The leaders of senior rank will ruefully excuse it on the ground that Mr. Mell is obviously ignorant of the records to which many of them could point—records which, in their evidence of unswerving loyalty to the rank and file through the most testing times and issues not only give the lie to Mr. Mell's desperate philosophy, but supply an impeccable warrant to represent the rank and file which the rank and file (save Mr. Mell) have manifestly neither ignored nor forgotten.

No Clash of Loyalties

Meeting Mr. Mell on his own ground, we may ask him why he assumes that in fighting for the little man the big man is necessarily doing a disservice to himself. If the big man is primarily concerned to maintain his own status and standards, does he not buttress them by maintaining the little man's? And if Mr. Mell's doubts of the seniors may have arisen in contemplating the kind of service-conditions case which engages the responsibility of the chief to his council, or the senior to his chief, what proportion are these of N.A.L.G.O.'s work as a whole? And why, in such cases, need the chief or senior now be placed in a position of clashing loyalties at all, in view of the highly differentiated means (branch, divisional organising secretary, head office, Whitley Council) which N.A.L.G.O. has wisely developed and can use and choose in such instances?

"Persons promoted should discreetly retire. . . . In a trade union the foreman does not go on deputations." From these further observations we must conclude Mr. Mell to believe that the Association should not cater for anyone above the general grade, or that the seniors need no protection of their standards or their discharge of duty. So long as society continues to differentiate rewards according to difference of function or responsibility, N.A.L.G.O.'s policy must be, as it is, to establish an adequate standard for the rank and file and a recognition of seniors which corresponds to valuations outside the service. As to protection in the discharge of duty, no class of officer more needs it (as the Law and Parliamentary Committee well know) than the chiefs who bear the brunt of the social, economic, and political frictions of the age.

The founders of N.A.L.G.O. envisaged a body embracing the whole service from town clerks to juniors. That is what N.A.L.G.O. has become. Adopting the principle of "each for all and all for each" in membership they applied it also in governance. Their belief that this was the best means of cementing a highly differentiated membership has been vindicated by an unceasing influx of members drawn from all grades.

Mr. Mell wants (inconsistently with his policy for promotees) to adopt representation by grades, and the methods of trade unions whose problems are different (since they deal with labour of uniform grade).

Fifty years after he has unsuccessfully tried to disintegrate N.A.L.G.O. by a class war, the successors to the Webbs will probably have written a classic on the "One Big Union" and on N.A.L.G.O. as its first exemplar.

Young man, close thy Marx: open thy Morris.

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The Woman Officer

Create More Posts and Remove the Marriage Ban

By LADY ERNEST SIMON

With this article Lady Simon introduces a new series to be devoted to the interests of women in the local government service

THE local government service is one that needs women, and one that should attract those women who want to combine earning their living with public service. A recognised method of entry, a grading scheme with fair opportunities of promotion, security of tenure and pensions, are now provided by an increasing number of authorities, and the status of the local government officer has correspondingly improved.

The functions of the municipal civil service are different from, but by no means less important than, those of the national civil service, and since women have been admitted to the highest grade of the latter they have proved their worth.

Local government, even more than national government, is concerned directly with the home and cognate problems. The extension of all the social services since the war, and the institution of new ones such as housing, mean that officials have to deal with multitudinous and often extremely intimate details of family life. The employment of women as doctors for much of the maternity and child welfare and school medical work, is a recognition of their special value, but it is not yet fully appreciated.

Administrative Posts Denied

Although girls as well as boys are welcomed in the lower branches of the administrative service, they are not so readily promoted to the higher. The tendency to keep them on clerical work, or on working the new calculating machines, is, I am afraid, very general, and it is rare that they get the same opportunities as men of the more interesting and responsible work. Yet half of the population which every authority administers is female, and if women teachers, women doctors, women health visitors and sanitary inspectors, are generally recognised as necessary for good government, why are they not given a fair chance of the administrative posts that control these officials ?

No one would suggest that the work of a health visitor could be done so well by a man as by a woman, but many authorities seem to think that men are more suitable as rent collectors than women—yet in nine cases out of ten the rent is collected from the housewife, and she can explain more easily to a woman than to a man her difficulty with the stove or the gas cooker, or the need for a gate to keep the toddler from running into the street. Again, ante-natal work is largely and appropriately in the hands of women doctors, but when the pregnant woman comes to register for a municipal house, she usually has to describe her family needs to a man.

Work Should be Shared

There are also very few women school attendance officers or public assistance officers, although the numbers are slowly growing. Work which involves visits to the home should, in my opinion, be shared equally by men and women—and so should administrative work, which concerns women as well as men.

Two of the reasons usually advanced for keeping women on the lower paid and more routine administrative work are :

That women prefer it, and

That, as they leave on marriage, any further training for higher work will be wasted.

With regard to the first reason, I do not deny that on the whole women do typing and shorthand work better than men, and as we all enjoy doing what we can do well, they probably like it better than do the men. But there is no evidence that, devoted as they may be to the work that they are given, some of them would not like a chance of more interesting work. All recruits should be given experience of the different sections of the work, so far as they prove capable of it. Only in this way can the local authority avoid waste of the material at its disposal, and keep a thoroughly satisfied staff.

With regard to the waste incurred by marriage there are two answers. Because most women wish to resign on marriage, it should not be assumed that *all* women are going to marry, and to deny the woman who does not marry the opportunity of satisfactory work that can compensate for the lack of the joys and responsibilities of marriage is not only unwise but cruel. There is no necessity for all women to resign on marriage. Just as some teachers and doctors find that they can combine marriage with keeping on their work, so could some of the women on the side of administration. If they are given nothing but routine work to do, they are naturally more ready to give it up than if they have interesting and responsible work.

Authorities Need Married Women

The fact that some local authorities have a marriage bar, not merely in the administrative side of the service but as regards teachers, doctors, dentists, health visitors, etc., means that those authorities often lose valuable members of their staffs. No one doubts that married women as elected members contribute to the efficiency of a council's work, and, in the same way, many administrative problems, particularly those connected with health, housing, education and public assistance, etc., would benefit by being handled by married women.

These questions of fair promotion, equal pay, freedom to remain after marriage are, in my opinion, the most important questions still to be settled with regard to the employment of women in the local government service. No one now doubts their ability for the work. Where the method of entry is by competitive examination, they do as well as the boy entrants, and the time is long past when, as in Manchester sixty-five years ago, women were only engaged as library assistants because of a dearth of suitable men ! They proved so successful, however, that the practice of women assistants was continued.

It is up to the women members of N.A.L.G.O. to fight for equal opportunity with the men, and it is up to the men to support them, for it must be somewhat derogatory to their self respect for them to feel—as at present—that they do not dare to face free competition from the women. The service as a whole will gain when the best material, both male and female, is put at the service of the community.

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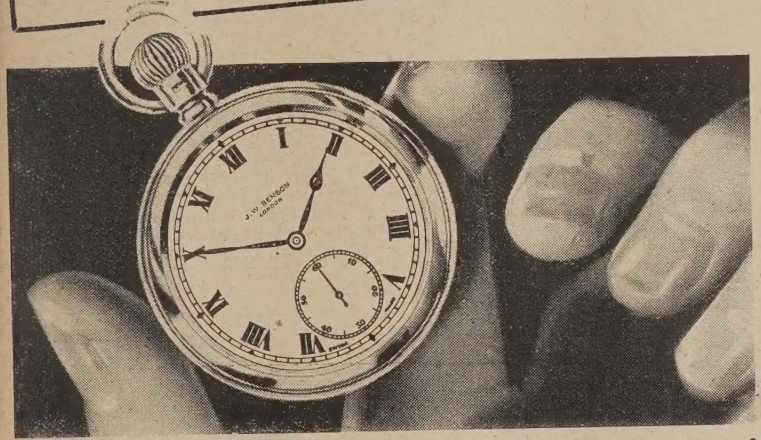

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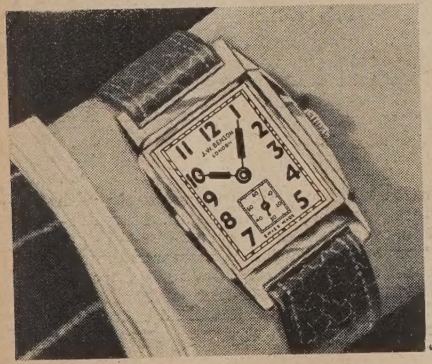

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Superannuation

The 1937 Act Explained: Mr. Simonds' Text Book

THOSE of us who will be intimately concerned with the new Superannuation Act will be thankful that such an expert as Mr. Simonds has produced a text book* for our guidance. I venture to suggest that "Simonds on Superannuation" will become the generally accepted text book on this intricate subject.

In the preface Mr. Simonds modestly refers to the decisions and opinions on superannuation questions which have come to his notice during the past twenty-seven years. It is an open secret that many of these decisions are the result of his perseverance in ensuring that the various Superannuation Acts should be interpreted fairly to the officers.

We are not, however, so much concerned with Mr. Simonds' qualifications for the task of writing this book as with the production itself. He has followed the practice now customary amongst local government writers of giving in an introduction a survey of the principal provisions of the Act and the changes in the law made thereby. This survey will be very helpful as a preliminary study of the Act and will be specially useful to those who must have a general knowledge of the subject but will not be called upon to interpret some of the intricate provisions in the Statute. Then follow nearly 100 pages setting out the actual Statute with full notes under each section.

A perusal of the notes indicates how thoroughly the author has performed his task. They include not only cross-references to other sections and quotations from all relevant circulars issued by the Ministry of Health up to December 30, 1937, but also observations containing the personal views of the author on the construction to be placed on some of the provisions. In making these observations Mr. Simonds has had the opportunity of considering the various problems which have been submitted to the Central Department for decision and those cases which have been decided by arbitration under the Act of 1922.

The actual administration of the Act will depend so much on the Regulations issued by the Ministry of Health that it will be impossible to say what should or should not be done under some of the sections without referring to the statutory regulations made thereunder. The various circulars issued by the Ministry are, therefore, not only set out in full in the Appendices but are also noted under each section.

Problems still to be Solved

Anyone reading the Act will realise that it is a very complicated measure. This feeling is intensified by a study of the Notes. Some matters still have to be determined, such as the interesting point as to whether an employee is or is not a female nurse, within the meaning of section 16.

The number of cases on questions relating to the superannuation of local government employees which have come before the Courts is comparatively small. The author has been careful to quote all cases having any bearing on the subject, including those decided under the Asylume Officers Superannuation Act, 1909. The effect of the Public Authorities Protection Act, 1893, on actions for the return of superannuation contributions is also considered.

It is rather a failing of writers of books on local government subjects to assume that every reader will have available one or other of the law reports in which he can read any particular case in detail. Frequently, therefore, a decision is mentioned in a few words only. This is sufficient for a town clerk or solicitor who has a good law library available, but it is a distinct inconvenience to others who may not be similarly situated.

Mr. Simonds has met this difficulty by quoting important cases in considerable detail. A whole page of Notes, for instance, is taken up by the case of Jones v. London County Council (1936). The case of Newill v. Clun Assessment Committee (1935) is used in construing the provisions as to the contributions to be paid by a transferred rating employee. These are only two of the instances in which cases decided under the old Acts have been of assistance in construing the provisions of the new Act. The detail which is given with regard to the various cases emphasises the fact that the book is complete in itself and can be understood without having to refer to other legal text books or law reports.

The author has taken the opportunity of including, as an appendix, rules relating to pensionable officers of local authorities who become established civil servants and to established civil servants who become pensionable officers of local authorities, and has added a chapter on "Superannuation and Income Tax" dealing with questions on that subject which have frequently been brought to his notice.

For convenience of reference there are also included as appendices the provisions of the repealed Act of 1922 and also a comparison of the sections of that Act with those of the new Act.

So much for the book. But what of the index, which so frequently spoils an otherwise good book? This is most exhaustive and shows the same care that has been given to the general text.

JOHN MOSS.

* The Local Government Superannuation Act 1937, by John Simonds, M.A. Eyre & Spottiswoode, 6 Great New Street, E.C.4. 20s.

"NURSES' CHARTER" PROGRESS

Early results of the Association's "Nurses' Charter," presented in the booklet, "A Woman's Calling," in December, have been encouraging. Many communications have been received expressing unqualified approval of the proposals. Many local authorities or their appropriate committees have considered them. They have been discussed by a number of branches, and several helpful suggestions have been made.

The Health Committee of Brighton town council has agreed that girls who have passed their fifteenth birthday should be accepted for practical training in nursing, although at present there is no preliminary training school at the municipal hospital. At Wigan and Blackpool the authorities have decided to adopt a 48-hour week.

Harrow urban district council recently considered the salaries and hours of the staff of its isolation hospitals as a result of the recommendations and decided to adopt the 96-hour fortnight and, in order to render this policy effective, to appoint additional staff with general hospital training at commencing salaries of £75, rising by annual increments of £5 to £95.

It is hoped that all branch officers will do all that they can to ensure that the "Charter" receives the consideration of their authorities. While success rests largely with the branches, headquarters and the divisional staff are ever ready to assist in every possible way.

The Association has forwarded a memorandum to the Inter-departmental Committee on Nursing, set up by the Minister of Health and the President of the Board of Education, and it is probable that it will be called upon to give oral evidence.

How Estonia Built up Social Services in 20 Years

By James Caro

Estonia celebrated the twentieth anniversary of her independence as a Republic on February 24. We are happy to publish this article by the Estonian Vice-Consul in Manchester, describing the wide scope of the country's local government services, mostly developed since 1918.

UP to the Great War Estonia was part of the Russian Empire. With the fall of the Russian Monarchy, the Estonian people seized the long-awaited opportunity of declaring their independence, and for twenty years they have been living a free life and enjoying a liberty unknown for seven centuries.

Estonia is situated on the East of the Baltic Sea, bounded on the North by the Gulf of Finland, and on the East by the Soviet Union. The country is rather bigger than Holland or Denmark, and the population is just under one and a quarter millions.

The organs of local government are branches of the State administration. They act, however, independently, and the Central Administration may intervene only by questioning the legality of their actions, referring points in dispute to the courts.

For the purpose of local administration the Republic has been divided into eleven provinces, each of which is again subdivided into (1) large towns, (2) boroughs, and (3) rural communes. The executive organs of the Local Government are :

In a town—the municipal administration, headed by a mayor.

In a province—the provincial administration, headed by a president.

In a commune—the communal administration, headed by an elected sheriff.

The Estonian legislation with regard to national minorities, which form 11.8 per cent of the total population, is said to be the most liberal in the world. The minority nationalities are assured education in their mother tongue, carried on under the control of the Government. Every Estonian citizen is free to determine his or her nationality. The minority nationalities may form their own autonomous institutions for promotion of their national culture and welfare, in so far as these do not conflict with the interests of the State.

Public Health Organisation

Estonia inherited little from Russia in public health, labour policy and social welfare. With the single exception of the insurance of labour against illness and accidents, the Russian laws were antiquated and practically inoperative. Everything had to be created anew.

In 1918 Estonia had no public health organisation. It was necessary to make a fresh start. The experience of ten years of systematic public health work led to the adoption in 1928 of a Public Health Promotion Law, under which the organisation of public health work was decentralised. The work is organised and controlled by the Public Health and Welfare Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs, assisted by an advisory body, the National Health Council. The actual work is carried on by local organisations.

The health organisation aims at the prevention of diseases —in particular of social diseases—through the promotion of public hygiene. Protection of motherhood and of children is particularly emphasised. The work is done in co-operation with other public and private organisations, and the best medical authorities. The following table shows the progress made since 1919 :

A Quaint Corner in Narva, Estonia

	1919-20.	1937
Doctors	370	932
Dentists	87	205
Trained nurses	176	552
Midwives	232	398
Masseurs	23	202
Medical Assistants in Schools ...	16	92
Dental Technicians	—	80

Social welfare policy, comprising pensions and welfare work, had also to be started anew in 1919. Officials of the Government and Local Self-Government, with their families, receive a pension under the Pension Law adopted in 1924.

Relief and Child Protection

The question of public relief was solved by the Relief Law, 1925, under which persons threatened with abject poverty are entitled to relief, which is administered principally by the organs of local government.

The law pays special attention to the protection and care of children, with the main object of training them to earn their living and to become useful citizens. Where children lack the opportunity of normal development support is given to their parents or they are placed with private families, remaining until the age of 16 or 18, or in homes which they are not allowed to leave before they have learnt some profession or trade and found employment.

During the depression 10,000 children of poor parents, besides receiving pecuniary aid, were given one substantial meal daily during the winter half-year. Children of poor health are sent to summer camps.

Every aged man or woman of 60 or more, if in distress, and every sick or crippled person, is entitled, according to circumstances, to receive pecuniary aid or full board in special homes. There is one workhouse, providing temporary occupation for persons in distress, but able to work.

Estonia has two forms of compulsory social insurance—against illness and against accident. Only industrial workers come under both forms ; sailors and agricultural workers come under the accident insurance only. State and railway employees are insured according to special laws. Insurance against accidents is at the expense of the employer, except in the case of agricultural workers where a part is paid by the Government. Insurance against illness is effected by sick funds.

The eight-hour day was sanctioned in 1931, and the long list of new labour laws includes one granting one week's holiday with full pay between January 1 and October 1 to the workers in all industrial enterprises of at least five workers.

Labour protection is controlled by eight inspectors, each having a special district, and seven deputy-inspectors.

Planning for To-morrow: Regional Control

By E. C. BOYCE, B.Sc., A.M. Inst. C.E., County Surveyor, Gloucestershire

I PROPOSE to be provocative. I disagree with the remarks of the President at the annual dinner of the North-Western and North Wales District committee at Liverpool on December 4, when he declared that an extension of regionalisation would prove a step towards Fascism.

I do not consider "regionalisation" retrograde; on the contrary, I regard it as the logical evolution of local government. I agree with Mr. Armitage, however, that we are on the fringe of great changes in local government and I welcome them; in fact, the sooner the changes come the better.

If local government is to progress with the times we must welcome rationalisation of the local administrative machine. If we, as local government officers, try to stifle or resist the natural evolution of a system which, like "Topsy," was not born, but "just growed," then we are more likely to have "Fascism" thrust upon us. Far be it from me to advocate the adoption of methods that can be termed "Fascist," but we must "put our house in order" *from within*, rather than facilitate the work of such advocates by resistance to proper progress.

In my view, the present system of local government has many faults, and the "Parish Pump" outlook will not improve matters. It is true that there has been a certain amount of decentralisation of detail by the government, but in some branches of the service there is a greater tendency to centralisation—for example, the taking over of the trunk roads by the Ministry of Transport and of the veterinary services by the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Local Government Act, 1929, was, in my opinion, only the beginning of a system of rationalisation of local government, and the sooner we have another Act the better.

Illogical Local Autonomy

The fault of the present system is that county councils, county borough councils, non-county boroughs, urban districts, and rural districts are all autonomous units of local government, working independently of each other, very often in the same area. There is no logic or reason for this other than tradition. And, while I do not deprecate the value of tradition, I feel that when it tends to clog the wheels of progress it is the duty of local government officers to point out its irrational basis.

The fundamental object of local government is to give efficient service to the community. Any action, therefore, which would promote the efficiency of the service cannot be lightly set aside; it may mean extra trouble, work, reorganisation, argument, dissension, but all such difficulties must be overcome in the interests of the public we serve.

Democracy is on trial; it must prove itself capable of adapting itself to the times or it will perish. I have recently returned from a visit to Germany, and one cannot but be impressed by the enormous strides made under the dictatorship there. If we are not for ever watchful for improvements in our democratic methods, an excuse will be made for the adoption of dictatorial measures in this country.

The principle of regionalisation, as I see it, is the logical outcome of the present system. To-day, in spite of the review of county districts, boundaries exist which cannot be justified except on the ground that they have always been so. In the first place, I consider that the boundaries between counties should be so adjusted that common areas with common needs should be under a common administrative body, which I will call the regional authority.

Regional areas might include one or more of the present counties, or parts of several joined to form a suitable administrative unit. Such an area would have to be sufficiently large to spread the rate burden fairly and evenly over a wide district. The authority should be the only rating authority for the region, and responsibility for all services at present rendered by local authorities, including county boroughs, in the region should be centralised in it.

Secondly, the region should be sub-divided into districts which would administer the services for their local areas. There should be decentralisation of the detail of administration and execution to the local authority, the regional authority retaining only a supervisory jurisdiction and responsibility for providing the necessary finance and ensuring the efficiency of each local unit.

With the central government responsible for legislation and the enunciation of general principles, the regional authority for interpretation for the particular region, and the local authority for actual administration and execution, I submit you would have a proper democratic system with centralisation and decentralisation each kept in its proper perspective.

There would bound to be resistance to any loss of powers, but I am convinced that the "man in the street" would welcome the simplification of the present system, and that it would tend to a far greater degree of efficiency in the service rendered to the community than obtains to-day.

THE NALGO GIRLS are appearing in "——and that's the show!" to be produced by the Manchester Municipal Players, from March 1 to 5. Book and lyrics by Messrs. Broome, Chandler, Cotton, Goldthorpe and Harrison.

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* * *

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A.C. or D.C.?

* * *

Le Mot Juste.

At a meeting held recently at the Royal Sanitary Institute, there was a learned discussion on "Recent Advances in Methods of Bed-Bug Disinfestation."

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* * *

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   South American plant
   image formed by rays of light
   hypothesis accounting for the stability of the atom
2. PRECEPT is a—
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   senior pupil
   official of Ancient Rome
3. NALGO is a—
   patent medicine
   cleaning powder
   Japanese general
   indoor game

* * *

Lapsus Linguae

A councillor was criticising the dominant party of his council on account of a proposed increase in the rates.

"The increase now contemplated," he said, in impassioned tones, "if put into force, will be a subject of reproach by your ancestors from generation to generation."

* * *

Overheard

"A gentleman come into the shop this mornin' to know if I could tell him anything about the monuments in the church. He said he was descended from some of the vaults."

Punctuation

I like the story of the innkeeper who found that an illiterate signwriter had repainted the sign: "Dogandduck," all one word, and said: "Here, that won't do. I want spaces between dog and and and and duck."

* * *

Unsolicited Testimonial to the Public Library Service

In reply to your query, I say "No!" as, outside the Bolshevik element in the district, no one uses or needs the free library. There are several 2d. and other libraries in the High Street that pay rates and taxes and strive to get a living.

—*From a letter in the "Orpington, St. Mary Cray and Kentish Times."*

* * *

An Idle Thought

The heading, "Council blows over donkeys," misled me. I realise now that it meant that people fought.

But at first I had a far more amusing vision of the Councillors blowing the donkeys to cool them—(a plebeian habit. Gentlemen push them into the saucer.) Then I imagined some host saying, "Remind me to blow out the donkeys before I leave the room."

—*From "Gallimaufry," by J. B. Morton.*

* * *

Thoughts on Leisure

It is commonly believed that happiness consists in leisure. We forgo leisure in order that we may have leisure, just as we go to war in order that we may have peace.

Aristotle.

* * *

The essence of hell is a perpetual holiday.—
George Bernard Shaw.

* * *

The truly happy man is surely the man whose work is his play, and his play merely recreation.—
W. R. Inge.

* * *

Vers Libre

i am so tired
of bye-laws standing orders
statutory rules and orders
and other excrescences
of the human mind
that sometimes
i think
an air-raid would be
almost
a welcome interlude
since after it there might
be
fewer
bye-laws standing orders
statutory rules and orders
and other excrescences
of the human mind.

Another Tough Guy

Disgusted film critic on a "star" he disliked:

"His idea of how a he-man should be played was to throw his chest three inches and follow it slowly across the screen."

* * *

Not Sleeping Sickness

"My wife and I suffer from alternate insomnia—whichever gets to sleep first keeps the other awake all night."

* * *

Local Government Service

A tenant in one of the houses in a Corporation Housing Estate had got into arrears with his rent and the Council concerned had authorised proceedings to be taken to secure possession of the house. An Order was obtained in the County Court, but the tenant had not complied with it. Accordingly, prior to the issue of an ejectment order, a letter was sent to the tenant, giving him seven days in which to vacate the premises and informing him that by doing so he would avoid any additional costs:

The tenant replied:

"Dear Sir,—I would be much obliged If you Could Grant me A Intervue In Front of a Councle meeting or Failing that In Front of The Howising Comety. If not I wish to Aske you to Please Refrain From Giving me Aney Further Free Advice untill I Aske you For Same As I Feel is you Could use your most worthy Abelaty To A More Serveceable Purpes. I Remain yours At Large

"THOS. HIGGINS."

AMENDE HONORABLE

"But we are in costume—we've come as Sanitary Inspectors."

Dedicated as a peace-offering to those Sanitary Inspectors offended by last month's cartoon depicting them in uniform.

"Can't you go into the next street—I haven't had a patient since you started here."

Forty-two into Two.

The minister, addressing a Sunday-school class, had taken for his theme the story of Elisha on his journey to Bethel—how the youngsters had taunted the old prophet, and how they were punished when two bears came out of the wild and ate forty and two of them.

"And now, children," concluded the pastor, wishing to stress the moral point, "what does this story show?"

"It shows," ventured one little girl timidly, "how many children two bears can hold."—*Harold W. Donahue in "The Toastmaster's Manual."*

* * *

A 192— Model.

"You have no speedometer in your car?"

"No need—if I do forty, the lamps on my car rattle—at fifty the whole car rattles—higher than that my teeth rattle."

* * *

Cause and Effect?

Heard in Dorset County Offices:

"The Public Assistance Officer (who is president of the county branch of N.A.L.G.O.) reported that public assistance, mental deficiency and N.A.L.G.O. had all increased during the past year!"

* * *

Expansion or Expulsion?

Directions issued to a local authority's "keep fit" class:

"Get out of bed, fling open the window, and throw the chest out!"

Apparently the chest is later collected and the process repeated next day.

* * *

True Story!

A charming young newly-wed tripped brightly into the cashier's office and handed him a rate demand note with the correct amount in cash. The cashier gave her a receipt.

C. Y. N.-W.: "Don't I get anything back?"

Puzzled Cashier: "There is nothing to be handed back."

C. Y. N.-W.: "Well, it states on the dust-cart, 'Burn your refuse and reduce your rates'—and I've been burning our refuse for the past three months."

Competition

Improving "L.G.S."

Report by the Editor

Readers are too generous. I asked for ten suggestions for improving LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE. I got a synopsis for a new and enlarged edition of the "Encyclopedia Britannica."

The variety of suggestions was astonishing and, to an editor setting out to give his readers what they want, appalling! A journal ten times the present size, appearing weekly instead of monthly, and with the revenue and resources of a national daily newspaper, could not hope to meet them all in a year. Here is a random selection, by no means exhaustive:

Features on motoring, wireless, music, the theatre, philately, china collecting, chess, photography, literary and debating societies, and puzzles;
Pages devoted to the interests of juniors, typists, civil servants, councillors, children, students, women, the social services, and sport;
Household hints and articles on men's fashions;
A column printed in shorthand;
A serial story—"preferably a thriller";
Articles on local government history, law and personalities, N.A.L.G.O. organisation, health, diet and fitness, individual towns, the countryside, office machinery, curious or striking experiences of officers, administration abroad;
Monthly reviews of Parliament and the law courts;
Reports of council meetings;
Separate English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish Notes;
Examination questions;
Columns for the exchange of books and arrangement of sporting fixtures;
Cartoons and comic strips;
More photographs, book reviews, letters, film criticisms and branch reports, longer articles, and better quality paper;
Fewer photographs, book reviews, letters, film criticisms and branch reports, shorter articles, and cheaper quality paper.

The Prizewinners—

Faced with this array of suggestions, judging has been extraordinarily difficult. After much reflection and with the fullest apologies to all those who consider their suggestions better, I award the prizes as follows:

First Prize—MR. T. BARTON, Water Mains Office, Town Hall, Manchester, for the following:

Attraction.

1. Make cartoons a regular feature.
2. More artistry in cover design and general layout, to give more attractive appearance.
3. Include humorous articles every month.
4. Full-page frontispiece.

Local Government.

5. Series of authoritative articles on particular problems of local government.
6. Several series of authoritative articles on methods of dealing with the same problem in different parts of the country.

Propaganda.

7. Interesting and statistical articles showing the nature and volume of work performed by the headquarters staff.
8. Illuminating articles on the difficulties met with by divisional secretaries, general secretary, and legal secretary, and how combated.

General.

9. Steady stream of articles on matters of topical and general interest to members, including effects of proposed or passed legislation, the actions of local councils, and probable future tendencies.
10. Branch magazines must often contain matter which would be of use and interest to members generally, and which could be reprinted in "L.G.S."

Second Prize—LESLIE TAIT, Education Department, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for the following:

1. All articles must be of high standard with more "meat" in them than hitherto.
2. N.A.L.G.O. news should be carefully selected and graded—to show how useful N.A.L.G.O. is to all—but without repetition each month of similar items.
3. Monthly notes would be valuable on:
   (i) New regulations and circulars.
   (ii) Local government in Parliament and law courts.
   (iii) Local developments, new equipment, etc., from all districts.
4. Articles on:
   (i) Local government in other countries.
   (ii) Relationship between authorities and "amateur" local government (social service, etc.).
5. Section on everyday tasks of rank and file—a comparison of administrative methods in various areas.
6. Articles on training for specialist posts.
7. Let junior members describe their work and grievances.
8. Better sectionalisation necessary. Regular features should be in regular position—*e.g.*, all book reviews together.
9. Too much intermingling of news with advertisements; type too uniform for both.
10. If any illustrations or crossword let them be good.

"CLERIHEWS"

Most readers are doubtless familiar with "Clerihews," those charming little verses of irregular metre and revealing personal allusion invented by Mr. E. C. Bentley. Here is an example:

"Sir Christopher Wren,
Went to dine with some men;
He said: 'If anybody calls,
Say I'm designing St. Paul's.'"

We offer a first prize of one guinea and a second prize of half-a-guinea, for the best "Clerihews" on:

The Town Clerk.
The Borough Surveyor.
The Sanitary Inspector.
The City Librarian.
The Public Assistance Officer.
The President of N.A.L.G.O.
The Inspector of Nuisances.

Readers' Forum

Is A.R.P. Adequate ? Men Who Are Passed Over. Value of the Rural Authority. Examinations and Promotion. N.A.L.G.O.'s New Insurance Plan.

IT has been laid down that some of us shall be appointed to explain the Government's air raids precautions proposals to the public. But before we can do that we must, surely, satisfy ourselves that they are sufficient and adequate. Are they ?

First, effectiveness. The Government suggests that an attack would probably be in three waves—high-explosive bombs, incendiary bombs, and, finally, gas bombs. It admits that gas bombs are much less to be feared than either of the other two, and especially the high-explosive bomb. Yet its schemes are full of action against gas bombs—the least important—while it has as yet no scheme to deal with either of the other two methods of attack. Why not ?

Sir Thomas Inskip has said in the House of Commons that 20 feet of mass concrete is necessary to withstand a hit by an average bomb. Madrid has shown that houses can be blown over 50 yards from the point of impact. We are, however, to suggest to the people that there is no real danger, once they board up their windows.

The incendiary bomb burns at over 3,000 degrees centigrade and, once alight, nothing will put it out. It takes about two minutes to begin burning ; water makes it burn more vigorously ; it will go through steel, concrete or anything else. We lecturers are to assure the public that if they have their scoop, bucket, and sand ready (with their dark glasses) they will be all right, even if they have to unseal the cellar door and run up two flights of stairs before they reach the bomb.

The civilian gas mask is to cost 2s. 3d., that for the wardens and troops about £3. The civilian type is very small and has one strap only around the ears ; there is no outlet for discharged breath, which has to escape round the sides of the mask ; the celluloid eyepiece stretches right across the front and is easily broken with the slightest creasing.

Acting calmly, without syrens blowing and so on, it takes a skilled man at least half an hour to seal up an average-sized room with, say, two windows, three doors and a fireplace. We shall have, approximately, ten minutes' warning of any attack.

Once inside the room, the Government says that we must stay there until the all-clear signal is given—probably several hours. How many hours will the air in a small room—and if householders have a room to set apart, it will probably be a small one—containing, say, six people, last without there being, at the least, considerable discomfort due to the high carbon-dioxide content ?

What of the millions, in London alone, who have no spare room to make gas-proof, let alone money for the materials ? What are they going to do ? You may read your handbooks in vain for any help for them, save for a murmur about evacuation. But this can hardly be taken as official policy.

Secondly, cost. We are paying 130 shillings a head a year for offensive weapons, and three shillings a head a year for these "precautions." Yet we are arming for defence only. The Government refuses to pay the whole of the bill, so that local authorities must levy rates for the purpose. And the areas whose need is greatest—congested districts round factories, railways, and docks—will be least able to pay.

Finally, results—not of a raid, but of the preparations for it. The population is is to be regimented and drilled and will be almost entirely under the domination of the military authorities. Parliamentary control will be done away with and D.O.R.A. revived. The social services will be cut down and in some cases stopped altogether. Who knows when they will be re-started ?

What are we going to do about it ?

I would suggest that before we have anything to do with the Government's proposals we should demand that *all* expenditure should be on completely defensive measures, These would chiefly be bomb-proof shelters constructed scientifically. Their cost ?—about £2 per head of population in cities and strategic towns. That is, about £10,000,000 altogether from local authorities on shelters. The total estimate for *all* A.R.P. measures was only £7,000,000 ! The other things would be really effective gas masks (that is, masks that would keep out arsenical smokes) and protective clothing. The total cost of all these would be a fraction of the present cost of armaments, and they would really be defensive ; further, we should be able to be quite honest with ourselves and the people with regard to their effectiveness.

Northampton. D. H. B.

PRIZES FOR LETTERS

A prize of half-a-guinea will be paid each month for the letter which, in the opinion of the Editor, is of the greatest interest to readers. This month's prize is awarded to D.H.B. for the letter on Air Raids Precautions.

FILLING OF VACANCIES

Problems of Selection

"Ambitious," in his letter on "Higher Grade Vacancies" in the January number, raises one of the most important points in the local government service, the manner and method of filling vacancies. He portrays one of the current contradictions in the local government service. Here is the antithesis of his example, from another area and authority : When a post is vacated in a higher grade the head of the department immediately places someone on the work from a lower grade for a probationary period.

The interim appointment enables the person in the post to have practical experience and he is assuredly placed on the short list. Finally, his name alone is put before the departmental convener and committee, and he gets the job while the "also rans" feel that they have been (and are being) "jockeyed" by such a system.

On the other hand, many applicants receive Certificates of Fitness for posts entirely outside their practical experience, and not infrequently those above whom they have been promoted have to teach them the work. Is it surprising that such a system, or lack of system, breeds discontents ? Perhaps some of my fellow officials will oblige with their opinion as to what is implied in the phrase "Certificate of Fitness." Is the sphere of education limited to scholastic theory and practical (real experience) a handicap to promotion in some instances ? What is the first essential, or the all-essential ?

"ANXIOUS."

Good Men Passed Over

The outstanding change in local government service in recent years, and one which has caused a certain amount of ill-feeling, is the appointment of new officials from other towns, when there are already efficient men who could quite well be promoted to a better job when it is going.

I fully realise that it is sometimes not possible to secure a highly-trained man from existing staffs, but there is a growing practice among councillors to go elsewhere when a new man is wanted."

Not only have old members lost promotion opportunities in this way, but the "agony" is increased when they know that the salary offered is often twice that paid in the past for the particular job. Members of N.A.L.G.O. must give serious consideration to new appointments that are denied them.

SQUARE DEAL.

Surrey.

A NEW IDEA for INSURANCE
More Details Wanted

I have read with interest the announcements of "A New Idea in Insurance" in the January and February issues of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

I want to congratulate the N.A.L.G.O. Insurance Department on being, I think, the first Life Office to extend the period during which it will pay an annuity under a Family Income Policy from 20 years to 30 years. At the same time I have a criticism to make. I have studied the literature on the Extended Assurance, and I cannot find that one of the most important factors is made as clear as it might be, namely the matter of £ s. d.

With the extension of the annuity period from 20 to 30 years the monthly instalments of premium are lower and, consequently, the Family Income Policy, hitherto out of the reach of many Local Government officers like myself, has been brought within their reach. The extension of the annuity period benefits members in two ways—it covers the risk for a longer period, and it spreads a smaller premium over a longer period. Perhaps the Insurance Department will, in the next number of the journal, explain what I, as a layman, am trying to convey.

Having had my grouse, I would like to say: "Carry on, N.A.L.G.O., and above all, let members have the fullest details of safeguards you provide, even at the risk of boring some."

R. B. N.

London.

SALARIES and PROSPECTS
Whitley Councils the Solution

Mr. A. H. Berrisford, in his letter on salary scales in the February issue, has, I am sure, stated an opinion which will be endorsed by many local government officers. Like many others, he has found that even when in possession of a matriculation certificate the road to success is not easy, and he has come to the conclusion that the much lauded "corporation job" is not quite the snip which it seems to members of the general public.

On the other hand, he says that the way to the higher positions in his department is barred, since the necessary qualifications cannot be obtained without entering college. I should be glad to have further details as to Mr. Berrisford's occupation, as I think I am right in saying that practically all qualifications necessary for promotion can now be obtained by means of appropriate correspondence courses.

A salary of less than £100 a year at 21 is not encouraging, but I think the solution is to be found in the establishment of a network of Whitley Councils to cover the whole country, which I believe is the present aim of the National Executive Council.

JOHN B. HALLIWELL.

28 Greenhill Avenue,
Deane, Bolton.

A Colleague's Advice

As one of the younger generation of local government officers, I greatly deprecate the suggestions of Mr. A. H. Berrisford.

He is apparently ready to condemn local government prospects generally because in his present post he meets what is, in effect, an "efficiency bar" (requirement of a university qualification), and has not had the initiative to do anything about it during the past four years.

My observations (perhaps unwelcome) on his case are as follows:

1. His present salary is presumably commensurate with the nature and responsibility of his present work—he claims no grievance in this direction.
2. He has given no tangible proof of his claim to promotion—true, he may have "worked hard" for four years, but no less is expected of every conscientious officer throughout his years of service.
3. His prospects of betterment are not restricted to his present authority.

If genuinely worthy of a higher position his evident confidence in his own ability should have stirred him during his past four years of "disillusionment" to study for the examinations of a professional association connected with his work, in order to gain promotion by securing a higher post elsewhere. If no such examinations are available, the N.A.L.G.O. exams are of sufficiently wide scope to be of assistance in practically all sections of local government work.

AUT DISCE, AUT DISCEDE.

Crayford, Kent.

Keep the PARISH COUNCIL!
Government Must Be Local

I should like to support Mr. Gardiner's arguments in the January Journal on the usefulness of parish and rural councils. Their abolition would take the important word "local" from management of the people's affairs which are best dealt with as locally as possible. You would need to alter the title of your valued journal and to take the "L" from N.A.L.G.O.!

I speak after 23½ years' experience as officer in a large rural area with several neighbouring urban areas and towns with which to compare. My district, of similar area but with more than twice the population of the Evesham rural district, is also able to provide all modern services—with splendid companies' bus services, too—all for a rate of 10s. in the £ per year.

Parish Councils may, and do, perform valuable service to their locality—services which detached and little interested county (even rural) councils would never perform satisfactorily. The same would apply were the rural councils' work to be taken over by a county or area committee.

An example is the taking over by county councils of the unclassified roads. This, in many cases, has resulted in continuous requests and complaints about small matters (but of importance to local residents) which were previously quickly attended to, but are now, since they are of small account to the detached county staff, lost in the welter of main road and other problems.

The parochial committee system operating in some rural districts, and so helpful to the locality served, is a return to the parishes concerned of *local* interest and *local* control in many matters—giving efficiency with economy, yet formed of Parish Councillors! I suggest the further development of this system by rural councils, such as the joining of two or more parishes not large enough for their own parochial committee, into a district committee of the rural council, and the joining of two or more contiguous parishes each having a Parochial Committee, into one district committee.

"RUSTICUS"

PHOTOGRAPHERS!
Enter Your Prints for the N.A.L.G.O Exhibition

The second annual exhibition of the Metropolitan district photographic section will be held at 24, Abingdon Street, S.W.1, from April 22 to 30. Entries will be accepted from all members of N.A.L.G.O., and entry forms may be obtained from Mr. W. F. Broome, Jnr., F.L.A., at the "Tate" Central Library, Brixton Oval, S.W.2. The last date for receiving entries is March 30.

On one evening there will be a showing of amateur local government films. This will be the first of its kind, and admission will, of course, be free.

TRAINED MALE NURSES
A Reply to "S.R.N."

Though I no longer wish to continue the controversy on trained male nurses, I wish to indite a little in my own justification. I am deeply hurt and surprised that a fellow member of N.A.L.G.O. and a member of the nursing profession should be so unfair, unjust, and unwise as to slur my qualifications in print.

I was admitted to the supplementary part of the state register on its formation just after passing my final for the Royal Medico Psycho Certificate. After infantry service in France I became company stretcher bearer. I had my first real insight into general nursing at the Ziegiler Lazarette at Schleswig, in Germany, during the 'flu epidemic that devastated Europe in 1917-1918. I qualified at a County Mental Hospital and later received my city appointment. I am still attached to the R.A.M.C. and pass most of my annual leave in camp, making a total of 20 years' nursing service.

GEO. HORN.,
R.M.P.A., R.M.N.
(Head Male Nurse.)

Smithdown Road Hospital,
Liverpool, 15.

A Veteran Looks Back—

Memories of N.A.L.G.O.'s Early Days, recalled

By Ald. W. H. PULLINGER

THE Superannuation Celebration Dinner must have stirred the memories of those who had been in the struggle from the beginning for, as Sir Herbert Blain pointed out, the history of the struggle was largely the history of N.A.L.G.O.

In the early days superannuation was undoubtedly the main consideration. But in the years that elapsed before partial success was obtained in 1922 many of the staunchest supporters of the Association were already enjoying the prospects of superannuation by the passing of Local Acts.

Looking back to the early years of the century one recalls the efforts of the London Municipal Association, of which the moving spirit was the then somewhat youthful Town Clerk of Camberwell, Mr. C. W. Tagg.

The objective was to secure a Superannuation Act to replace the Metropolitan Act of 1866 with its "may at its discretion"—a discretion frequently used to send the applicant "empty away." The effort failed, but in 1903 Sir Herbert Blain—then Mr. H. E. Blain—came to West Ham from Liverpool, where there was an Officers' Association in existence. Finding that several associations had been started in the London area, as a result of the passing of the Local and London Government Acts, he, with his wonderful energy, enterprise, and organising ability, called a meeting at West Ham. Some ten or twelve of us attended. Other meetings followed—meetings which may be looked upon as N.A.L.G.O.'s ante-natal clinics—and it was decided to form a Metropolitan District Association. In the meantime negotiations were carried on with various Associations in the Provinces and N.A.L.G.O. was born in July, 1905.

First Year's £5 8s. 5d. Balance

Before me lies the first Cash Statement of the Metropolitan District for the year ending March, 1906. It is a most interesting document, throwing light on some of N.A.L.G.O.'s modest beginnings. From it can be learned that there were, in the Metropolitan Area, 401 members paying an annual subscription of 1s. 6d., and 22 paying 2s. 6d.—the increase coming into force in 1906—and that the subscription allotted to the National Association was 3*d. per head*, on a membership of 350.

The statement also shows that:

A combined meeting was held in West Ham town hall.

Delegates were sent to the two Conferences.

A concert was held in East Ham town hall.

A sports meeting was held at Wanstead, and

There was even a trip to Windsor.

The officers were: Mr. Blain (chairman), Mr. Ashmole (vice-chairman), Mr. Pullinger (treasurer), and Mr. Clark (secretary), and the auditors were Messrs. W. Scott and H. J. Farmer. It is interesting to note that there was a balance of £5 8s. 5d.

Such were the small beginnings in the Metropolis. None of the members dreamed of the time when they would form part of an Association numbering 100,000.

The next few years were devoted to missionary work—persuading members to join and form new branches, preventing secession whenever it was found necessary to raise subscriptions, and continuing the struggle for superannuation.

Re-organisation in 1917

The first great progressive step in the history of the Association was the appointment of a permanent secretary in the person of Mr. L. Hill, to whose moderating influence, tactful management and organising ability the Association owes so much. Progress was continued with the formulation of Mr. Blain's education programme, the establishment of the Benevolent Fund, with which the name of Mr. Darricotte must always be associated, and in the London District at least, with the organising of various sports.

Then came the War. Superannuation efforts had to be suspended, but a great impetus was given to Union activities and Whiteleyism was born. Bonuses to meet the increased cost of living were secured.

In 1917 a great step forward was made. The Association was reorganised, put upon a democratic basis with an elected executive, and went forward with leaps and bounds. The appointment of Mr. Fox as organising secretary, to be followed shortly by the appointment of several others, led naturally to the creation of many new branches.

Then came the struggle to set up a National Whitley Council and, although its formation did not achieve the results desired, it did establish several Provincial Whitley Councils and formulate a salary scheme. Although the latter was not accepted by many authorities, it set up an ideal which is gradually being attained.

A Convalescent Home was established, a Provident Society set up, and support for the Benevolent Fund grew with the presentation of purses at enthusiastic conferences.

Then we achieved our first great success—the passing of the 1922 Superannuation Act. What rejoicing there was when it was known that Sir Herbert Nield had secured the first place in the ballot for Private Members' Bills! What despondency when he refused to promote a compulsory measure! It was an anxious time for the sub-committee entrusted with the negotiations, and it was with great reluctance that they decided to carry on with a permissive Bill. Looking back one sees that it was a wise decision, as it soon became evident that a compulsory measure would never have been accepted by the House.

How one's memories go back to the drafting of that Bill—the many meetings with Sir Herbert Nield, with the Ministry officials, and with Mr. Jackson, our Parliamentary Agent, to whom we cannot give too much praise for his patience and perseverance. Then, when the Bill came before the House, how narrow were our escapes and how murderous we felt towards Sir Frederick Banbury as, week by week, he successfully obstructed.

Greatest memory of all, however, is that last night of the session—August 2—when the Lords' Amendments were to be put. The Bill was not reached until past 11 o'clock. In that little gallery behind the Members' benches were seated five anxious persons—Messrs. Johnson, Lord, Pullinger, Hill, and Jackson. Amendment after amendment followed in rapid succession, with from the Speaker: "Those in favour say 'Aye,' on the contrary 'No.' The ayes have it." All went well for some time until an amendment was met with a stentorian "No!" from a well-known Labour member. The Speaker looked round, said "The Ayes have it," and no division was challenged. The same thing happened with the next amendment, but by that time Mr. Tom Myers had seated himself next the objecting member and all was well. On the stroke of 12 o'clock all the amendments were passed and the tired sub-committee trooped out rejoicing, and thankful that there were no licensing restrictions in the House of Commons.

64 Years of Progress

It is 64 years since my entry into the service of a local authority and the development has been amazing. Then there were practically no full-time town clerks nor medical officers, no sanitary inspectors nor health visitors, no technically-trained officers for finance, valuation, registration, etc. Most were appointed from outside the service and learnt their business after appointment—a heterogeneous collection now being welded into a profession and rapidly becoming that municipal civil service that we used to discuss.

This evolution is largely due to N.A.L.G.O. with its widespread activities—its interest in public administration, its educational work for the training of officers and its regard for their welfare.

My many years' experience on the employer's side has shown me that nothing conduces more to the efficient carrying out of the many responsibilities of local authorities than the harmonious co-operation of council and staff. To the latter may I, in concluding, add: Be courteous but never servile; acquire all necessary technical qualifications; do your job thoroughly; keep clear of party politics; play your part in all social work that concerns the citizens whom you serve and you will continue to earn appreciation of your work and advancement of your professional status.

—and a Junior Looks Forward

Call for Membership and Salaries Drive

By C. A. Norman

We print this article as representing the views of a Junior Officer, without necessarily agreeing with either its diagnosis or its conclusions, in the belief that it will stimulate thought and discussion.

IN the history of many great movements, after a period of somewhat haphazard development, there has come drastic re-organisation leading to standardisation and uniformity. This process has occurred in the teaching profession. The days when a teacher was paid £20 or £30 a year have given place to a uniform scale—the Burnham Scale—which has generally increased and standardised teachers' salaries Thus order emerges from chaos.

The local government service is comparatively young, and is still in the transitional period. The aspect it will eventually wear depends upon local authorities and the central government on the one hand, and upon the organisation and "bargaining power" of local government officers on the other. It is obvious that the latter factor must play a big part if the service is to be an attractive one.

Equality with Civil Service

It cannot be denied that it would be equitable to pay local government officers as well as civil servants for similar work. The work of local government is equally important, though vastly different. The standard of officers has been, at any rate until recent years, as good in the local government service as in the civil service. In the last year or two the remuneration offered in the local government service for junior officers has been insufficient to attract the best type of entrant. Unfortunately few authorities realise how short-sighted is the policy of paying low salaries and getting a poor selection of juniors. With many progress will never come from within, and must, therefore, be imposed from without.

What is the goal at which to aim? A satisfactory one, at least temporarily, appears to be equality with the civil service. This does not exist at present. Many local government officers entering the service with Matriculation or School Certificates are paid at about half the rate of people with similar qualifications who enter the civil service. The principle is now well established that local administration is a matter for local authorities, but, in view of the need to impose progress from without, it appears that there should be two national salary scales, equal to those offered for similar work in the civil service—one for London, and one for the Provinces. A local government commission might be appointed, as a department of the Ministry of Health, with departmental officers at centres throughout the country, to arrange the supply of local government officers to the authorities. It would probably be necessary to hold competitive examinations on similar lines to the civil service examinations.

The attainment of this goal presents difficulties. In all similar professions, an increase in the "bargaining power" of those employed has resulted in the bettering of conditions of service. The aim, therefore, in the first place must be to secure the maximum potential bargaining power, by means of 100 per cent membership of N.A.L.G.O.

Some officers who do not join the Association give as their reason that its policy is not sufficiently aggressive. This attitude creates a vicious circle: N.A.L.G.O. cannot pursue a policy of "maximum aggressiveness" unless all local government officers are members. Perhaps another reason for a policy which may appear insufficiently aggressive is the fact that the branches are usually governed by an executive committee which is frequently largely composed of older members who hold, perhaps, the better-paid positions. While it is agreed that the wisdom, influence, and experience of older and better-paid officers are indispensable on executive committees, it is natural that these officers generally should be unable to understand the problems and difficulties of the young officer. His welfare should be in the hands of a force more powerful than mere altruism on the part of the older officer.

Post-Entry Examination

In many areas officers are compelled to take examinations to obtain even a salary adequate to provide a bare minimum standard of living. While the educational value of preparation for examinations cannot be over-stated, every efficient officer should be paid enough to enable him to live decently and to marry if he wishes, at a reasonable age. Post-entry examinations should be employed merely as an aid to the selection of officers for higher positions, the salary for which is above the minimum.

To break the "vicious circle," two courses are open. I appeal to all local government officers to join N.A.L.G.O.; and to N.A.L.G.O. to attack this important problem, which is becoming more dangerous, with its usual tenacity.

Metropolitan Carnival Dance

Tickets for a carnival dance arranged by the metropolitan district committee, to be held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Friday, March 4, at 7.30 p.m. to midnight, may be obtained from branch secretaries or direct from the honorary social secretary, Mr. P. W. Bond, Town Hall, Walthamstow, E.17.

FILMS TO SEE THIS MONTH

Pick of the March Releases

Far and away the best of the March films is **One Hundred Men and a Girl,** Universal. One of those rare pictures in which Hollywood, when all hope seems lost, demonstrates to a disillusioned world that it is still capable of simplicity, charm, and sincerity. The film is a pleasantly original version of the Cinderella story, with one hundred out-of-work musicians as the Cinderellas and Deanna Durbin as the fairy godmother who, through her impetuous youth and gaiety, brings them happiness and fame in a symphony orchestra. Miss Durbin's dew-fresh innocence and simplicity, the entire absence —believe it or not—of Lurve interest, the fine characterisation of the out-of-works, and the glorious playing of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski, make it a picture on no account to be missed

Ali Baba Goes to Town, 20th Century Fox.—Although designed for American minds in its parody of the Roosevelt administration, should appeal in this country as most Eddie Cantor films do. Given a film part, Eddie falls asleep in a jar, dreams himself in Baghdad where he introduces modern "reforms," including "swing," and wakes up at the peak of his career when in triumph he routs the army of a villainous prince.

The Bride Wore Red, M.G.M.—With the old basis for romantic comedy that "clothes make the man." Joan Crawford as Anni, a singer in a disreputable cafe, is given a fortnight's holiday in the Tyrol where Robert Young, society playboy, falls in love with her. Franchot Tone, Nature-loving postman, saves Anni from such an incongruous match. At first witty and interesting, the theme gives way to wearisome conversation although the photography is excellent throughout.

The Prisoner of Zenda, United Artists.—Anthony Hope's romance of Ruritania, produced lavishly in settings of pomp and ceremony, provides Ronald Colman with an opportunity to excel in the dual roles of the King and Rudolf Rassendyll, his half-brother. With Douglas Fairbanks as Rupert of Hentzau, Madeleine Carroll as Princess Flavia, and a thrilling rapier duel.

Stage Door, R.K.O. Radio.—A melodrama of life from the viewpoint of chorus girls and would-be actresses, who are hard, kind, catty and sentimental by turns beneath a veneer of wisecracks. Katherine Hepburn is at her best, and Ginger Rogers makes a delightful comedienne with Adolphe Menjou and Andrea Leeds.

They Won't Forget, Warner.—A story of mob-rule, telling of the hate of the Southerners for the Northern States of America, and how a young Northerner, suspected of murder, is convicted by an unprincipled district attorney, and after a farcical trial is lynched by the crowd. Despite powerful characterisation by Claude Rains and Allan Joslyn, the effect is uninspiring.

N.A.L.G.O. and the "Anti-Graft Crusade"

A Challenge Not Accepted

On January 16, the "Sunday Pictorial" announced, under big headlines on its front page, the launching of "a gigantic campaign to wipe out graft and annihilate the racketeers who are strangling business and municipal life in Britain." In an article below Mr. Rayleigh Best, described as the paper's "Special Investigator," alleged, among other "amazing facts" which he had discovered in a four weeks' investigation, that:

"Widespread bribery is affecting the allocation of council houses in all parts of the country;

"Land speculators, armed with advance knowledge of local municipal expansion schemes, are boosting prices sky-high;

"Councillors with personal interest in building, electrical and other supplies, are being allowed vital votes in the starting of new housing estates and the award of contracts; and

"Small contractors find their private tenders undercut by big firms with municipal 'pull.'"

In the following week's issue this "Special Investigator" told how he had received, from hundreds of correspondents, "a turbulent, seething river of venom from honest folk confronted with the grant GRAFT," and continued, in equally lurid language:

"Graft, in its most vindictive form, is eating away the soul of Britain . . . From the humblest home to the mightiest business, from the rural council to his Majesty's Government, the rot has set in."

Anonymous Allegations

There followed a number of quoted allegations, all anonymous, all carefully avoiding any hint that would identify the criminal, of corruption, bribery, and nepotism in municipal and business life.

"What is to be done?" asked the "Special Investigator" at the end of this turbulent recital. "I am handing the information I have received on to the appropriate people. A surprise is in store for them."

This gave hope to N.A.L.G.O. which for years had sought in vain the evidence of that rot which, we are told, is "eating away the soul of Britain." So the general secretary wrote to the "Special Investigator."

"I have," he said, "received a number of complaints from different parts of the country expressing bitter resentment with the articles which have appeared in recent issues of the 'Sunday Pictorial,' on corrupt practices in local government.

"The articles do seem to me to represent the worst form of journalism—unsupported attacks on a body of men and women unable to defend themselves. In no instance, so far as I have seen, do you give any evidence which would satisfy a court of law. If you have evidence of bribery and corruption would it not be fairer to state it openly or to bring it to the attention of the police?

"In 1933, when similar vague and unproven allegations were made, the National Executive Council of this Association passed a resolution pledging itself to take all legal steps possible in every case where definite evidence could be obtained of attempted bribery or corruption of a local government officer. At the same time it appealed to anyone with such evidence to produce it.

"The resolution of my Council still stands. If you can provide us with concrete evidence of a single case of bribery or corruption or of attempted bribery or corruption of a local government officer, we shall take appropriate action.

"Surely this would be preferable to condemning by inference and innuendo a body of men and women whose standard of integrity is as high as that of any class in the country. As you are clearly aware, the public is only too ready to believe ill of those engaged in the task of public administration. But the spreading of suspicion through anonymous allegations for the sake of a newspaper 'story' is poor journalism. It is no more justifiable to keep 'just on the right side of the law' in journalism that it is in public administration."

EASTER!

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College Avenue, Rhos-on-Sea,

COLWYN BAY, NORTH WALES

Eagerly we awaited the volume of evidence which would support the "Special Investigator's" startling revelations. His reply came, on February 4.

"Dear Mr. Hill," he wrote, "I can quite understand that my articles must have upset many of your members.

"From personal experience in all parts of the country, I have nothing but praise for local government officers, and I think we attempted to make it fairly plain that it was not the paid, but the unpaid, administration that was mainly responsible.

"I am still reading through the hundreds of letters of accusation which have arrived in this office from all over the country. If I find instances in which the evidence is so concrete that it will be possible for you to take steps, I will certainly get into touch with you.

Yours faithfully,

"R. BEST."

We are still waiting!

CORRUPTION SHOWN IN A FILM

Association's Protest

The film "Spring Handicap" shows an assistant at the town clerk's office disclosing a proposal for building a by-pass road to a solicitor who acquires property to be affected and from whom the assistant is to receive a "commission."

Having seen the film the general secretary protested to the producers, Associated British Picture Corporation, on Dec. 1.

"The impression which the public get from this incident," he wrote, "is that an official at the town hall gives information of an advance nature in order to get a 'rake-off,' or commission.

"I am directed to point out that this is an unfair suggestion. The local government officers in this country do not do that sort of thing, and as an association representing over 100,000 local government officials I have to register a very serious protest against the incident and to express the hope that in any future films you are handling you will pay due regard to the feelings of such an important section of this country's public servants."

Producers' Reply

On February 23, after two reminders had been sent, Mr. Robert Clark, on behalf of the film company, replied:

"We think your complaint is based on a misconception, as it was never our intention to suggest that the person at the town hall was an official, but simply someone who had got himself—as they say—'in the know.' Moreover, we feel that no one could jump to the conclusion that this person could be a local government officer.

"We would like you to believe that we are always at great pains to avoid anything causing offence to any official body or indict any person . . . and we are very disconcerted that such an unfortunate view should be formed in regard to 'Spring Handicap.'

"Following upon your letters we have advised our Production Department of your complaint and reiterated our instructions that nothing should ever appear in our films which might give offence to an organisation such as yours or to people generally."

NALGO BUILDING SOCIETY

Free Advertising Service

MAIDSTONE (Kent).—Det. freehold, brick garage, 3 bed., 2 recep., tiled kit. and bath, 2 w.c.'s, cen. heating, garden laid out, 10 min. Session House, £860.—Box H.P.B., No. 20, 24, Abingdon St., S.W.1.

HUTTON (Essex).—Det. freehold brick bungalow, 4 rooms, bath, scullery, large garden, space garage, gas, electricity, Ascot water heater, near shops and buses, 40 min. Liverpool St. Stn., £500 or offer.—A. McClellan, 194, Ansley Rd., S.E.20.

PARKSTONE (Dorset).—Modern self-cont. flat to let—2d. return bus Bournemouth; 1 recep., 2 bed., kit., bath, w.c., garage, garden, 27s. 6d. p.w. inc.—Miss Turner, 22, Hampshire Ct., Bournemouth.

ROMFORD (Essex).—New semi-det. freehold, 3 large bed., 2 recep., tiled kit. and bath, 2 w.c.'s, large garage, backs orchard, no road charges, £750 or near offer.—R. Clarke, 7, Osborne Close, Romford.

RENT IS AN EXTRAVAGANCE

but BUYING a house is an economy

It is not worth while renting the house you have chosen when you can buy it on such advantageous terms through the Nalgo Building Society.

If you require an advance up to 90% of the value or purchase price (whichever be the lower) only 4½% interest is charged, whilst on advances up to 66⅔%, the interest is only 4¼%. In approved cases 100% will be advanced, at 4½%.

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It is an outstanding feature of the Society's house purchase facilities that where an advance is made with interest at 4½%, the rate is reduced to 4¼% from the 1st January following the date on which the mortgage is reduced to two-thirds of the value repayable over 20 years.

On an advance of £600 the yearly repayments amount to £46-4-0 of which, during the first year, £19-4-0 is paid off the capital. Therefore, only £27 is represented by rent, or 10s. 5d. per week.

It is much cheaper to buy than to rent.

12

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24 ABINGDON STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.1.

All Headquarters Communications should be addressed to the General Secretary and endorsed with the appropriate subject.

HEADQUARTERS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

24, ABINGDON STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W.1

Telephone: **WHItehall 9351** (6 lines)

Telegrams: **Natassoc, Parl., London**

OFFICERS

General Secretary: L. Hill.

Deputy General Secretary, Legal Secretary and Insurance Secretary: J. Simonds, M.A., Barrister-at-Law.

Accountant: H. G. Baker.

Organising Secretary: J. B. Swinden.

Education Secretary: H. Slater, B.Sc. (Econ.), F.C.I.S.

Special Activities Secretary: H. Wright.

Public Relations Officer: A Spoor.

Divisional Secretaries:

Metropolitan and Eastern: T. M. Kershaw, 24, Abingdon Street, S.W.1.: WHItehall 9351.

North-Western and North Wales: Haden Corser, 2, Mount Street, Manchester, 2: Blackfriars 7668.

North-Eastern and Yorkshire: W. Cecil Wood, 12, East Parade, Leeds, 1: Leeds 24861.

East Midland, West Midland and South Wales: J. E. N. Davis, Prudential Buildings, St. Philip's Place, Birmingham, 3: Central 1836.

South-Eastern, Southern and South-Western: F. Thomas, Room 60, Somerset House, Reading: Reading 3880.

Scottish: J. M. Mortimer, 67, West Nile Street, Glasgow, C.1: Douglas 404.

COST OF LIVING

The average percentage increase in the cost-of-living index over the July 1914, level for each of the last six months is:

Sept. 55	November 60	January 59
October 58	December 60	February 57

The percentage increases for the past three months in each of the five groups on which the index figure is based are:

	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
Food	46	45	42
Rent	59	59	59
Clothing	110	110	110
Fuel and Light ..	85	85	85
Other items ..	75	75	75

IMPORTANT DATES

March 11.—Meeting of the committees of the National Executive Council in London.

March 12.—Meeting of the National Executive Council in London.

March 25.—Renewal premiums due on N.A.L.G.O. Household Insurance Comprehensive Bonus Policies.

March 26.—Holiday centres, cruise and Swiss holidays. Reunion in Manchester.

March 31.—Last day for Voluntary Contributors to elect method of pensions insurance

BLACKPOOL CONFERENCE

March 15.—Nominees for election of National Executive Council may withdraw up to 5 p.m. on this date.

April 1.—Journal will contain Agenda. Report of N.E.C. to be issued to representatives with Agenda.

April 15.—Amendments to motions in Conference Agenda to be received at Headquarters by 5 p.m. Voting papers for N.E.C. to be in hands of Branch Secretaries.

April 23.—Voting papers for election of N.E.C. to be in hands of members.

May 1.—Voting papers to be in hands of Secretary of District Committee. Journal will contain amendments to motions.

May 2.—Counting of votes for election of National Executive Council commences.

May 7.—Voting papers for Honorary Officers and for venue of Annual Conference, 1939, to be in hands of Branch Secretaries.

VISIT THE EMPIRE EXHIBITION

The Association is hoping to arrange for special terms for parties of members who wish to visit the Empire Exhibition at Glasgow.

Will branch secretaries bear this idea in mind when planning their annual outings. All interested should communicate at once with Headquarters.

May 21.—Conference Agenda (containing motions and amendments thereto) and list of representatives to be forwarded to representatives.

Branches desiring to divide voting strength at Conference to notify Headquarters of allocation.

Voting papers for Honorary Officers and for venue of Conference to be returned to Headquarters.

June 4.—Whit Saturday. First day of Conference proceedings.

June 6.—Whit Monday (Bank Holiday). Second day of Conference proceedings.

HEADQUARTERS AND BRANCHES

The following circulars have been sent to branch officers:

JANUARY 24

10/AS/38 (To local correspondents of the Approved Society.)
Giving details of new arrangements for the administration of ophthalmic benefit.

11/AS/38 (To local correspondents of the Approved Society.)
Regarding transfers from the compulsory to the voluntary class of contributors, in view of the changes imposed by the Contributory Pensions Act, 1937.

JANUARY 26

12/GEN/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Concerning the February issue of "Local Government Service."

13/GEN/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Enclosing copy of a form for recording changes in branch membership, and giving information as to the purposes for which the particulars will be used.

14/GEN/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Enclosing copy of a list of books on local government, and stating that further copies may be obtained.

15/ORG/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Requesting information as to progress made with the Charter for women in the nursing and public health services.

16/ORG/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Concerning the cost-of-living inquiry.

17/ORG/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Regarding notification of movements of members.

JANUARY 31

18/LOG/38 (To certain local correspondents of Logomia.)
Stating that a cheque has been forwarded to the branch treasurer in respect of introduction fees, and enclosing a statement showing how the amount has been made up.

19/LOG/38 (To each local correspondent of Logomia.)
Enclosing copy of the "Bridging the Gap" booklet and stating that further copies may be obtained.

FEBRUARY 9

20/GEN/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Requesting names of "Beano" contact officers.

21/GEN/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Concerning (a) the most recent Association membership figure; (b) the improved "Local Government Service"; (c) information as to the number of junior officers in each branch, and their membership of the Provident Society.

22/CON/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Enclosing form for nomination of the National Executive Council, 1938-39, and giving detailed information.

23/GEN/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Asking for the number of copies of the annual report required for branch executive committees.

24/SA/38 (To each branch secretary.)
Regarding the Association's arrangements for Easter holidays in Paris and on the French Riviera.

Salaries and Service Conditions

SERVICE CONDITIONS

Blackpool.—As the result of an application by the Association, the Council proved the following scheme of annual lidays for the professional, administrative and technical staffs commencing nuary 1, 1938 :

	Working Days
rmanent	
Officers with a salary of £350 or over, calculated on April 1 in any year	21
With 15 years' service and over	18
With 10 to 15 years' service	16
Others	14
mporary	
At the discretion of the head of the department	14

Leeds.—A comprehensive memorandum has been submitted to the establishments sub-committee following difficulties which have arisen in the city easurer's department as a result of echanisation. The divisional secretary nd representatives of the Leeds branch ttended a meeting, at which Sir Leonard oates (the corporation's financial adisor), and the deputy city treasurer ere present. The committee agreed iat the shift system in the billing section ould be abolished as soon as practicable, nd that arrangements be made for overme to be reduced to a minimum. The ming system has been abolished, and the ity engineer was asked to submit a eport on improvements in artificial ghting, ventilation, floor covering, cloakoom and lavatory accommodation. Arangements are also to be made to prevent vercrowding in the department.

Bradford.—A proposal to introduce hort-time working at the conditioning ouse with consequent loss of pay to fficers was referred back by the city ouncil, as a result of a communication ubmitted by the divisional secretary. The conditioning house sub-committee agreed to receive the divisional secretary, nd to defer further action until the matter had been reviewed again after the end of the financial year.

Manchester.—As a result of a representation on behalf of the managerial staff at an inquiry into the conduct of a porter in whose defence mismanagement was alleged, the Association secured the exoneration of the management from any charge or criticism and the transfer of the porter to another institution.

Cardiff.—It was agreed, following the divisional secretary's interview with the salaries sub-committee, that meetings of the local joint consultative committee should in future be held strictly in accordance with its constitution.

Northampton.—Although involving the alteration of meetings of committees, the council agreed to change the weekly half-holiday of the staff from Thursday to Saturday.

Harrow.—Following representations by the staff side of the Whitley committee the council has provided that :

Each officer shall be entitled to leave of absence, with pay, on the morning of one Saturday in three ;

All members of the staff being members of the Territorial Army shall, in addition to their holidays, be entitled to attend camp for 15 days with full pay.

The council has also merged the general and junior grades, resulting in automatic advancement, subject to satisfactory service, to a salary of £250 (women £175). A special grade has been created for district sanitary inspectors (£260—£15—£380).

A reduction in the working hours of the nursing staff at the Isolation hospital to 96 hours per fortnight, and the appointment of six additional staff nurses at a salary of £75—£5—£95 have been effected.

SALARIES

The following authorities have adopted salary scales of the Lancashire and Cheshire Whitley Council :

Lytham St. Annes.—Amended general division scales.

Nelson.—Increase in general division scales.

Stretford.—Female scales.

Rochdale Council has adopted the Whitley Council's grading scheme in principle.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—On the application of the Divisional Secretary, in collaboration with the Women Public Health Officers' Association, the corporation has increased, as from April 1, the salary scale for health visitors from £170—£220 to £190—£10—£230 a year, and the salaries of tuberculosis visiting nurses by £10 a year. The city council has also approved the following new scales for nursing staffs at the City Hospital for Infectious Diseases and the General Hospital :

Staff nurses—£70—£5—£90.
Ward sisters—£95—£5—£120.
Administrative, night and theatre sisters—Maximum, at present £120, to be no less than £130, according to post.

Middlesbrough town council has approved a 48-hour week for all nursing staffs with revised salary scales, from April 1 :

Home sisters—£95—£5—£110.
Night sisters—£95—£5—£100.
Ward sisters—£85—£5—£95.
Staff nurses—£70—£5—£75.
Assistant nurses—£55—£5—£60.
Probationer nurses—£30—£5—£40.

Brecknock C.C.—On the application of the divisional secretary the council approved revised salary scales for health visitors and school nurses.

Burton-upon-Trent.—The corporation, with the approval of the branch, has inserted two additional grades in its salaries scale.

Smethwick C.B.C. has approved revised and improved salary scales.

Abertillery U.D.C. has granted a bonus of 5s. a week to meet the increased cost of living to officers receiving £156 per annum and under, as from December 1, 1937.

Beeston U.D.C. has adopted the N.A.L.G.O. scale for junior officers of both sexes up to age 21.

Halesowen Corporation and **Bedworth** U.D.C. have adopted salary scales

Worcester City Council has approved the following new scale for male juniors : £45 at 16, rising by £15 yearly to £150 at 23.

Millom R.D.C. has granted an increase of 7½ per cent in the salaries of all employees with less than £175 a year to compensate for increased cost of living.

Hastings has increased the annual increments in grades C (£70—£160) from £10 to £15, thus securing to junior officers £3 a week at 25

SUPERANNUATION

The following councils have passed the necessary resolutions in connection with the adoption of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922 :

Boroughs	*Appointed day*
Heywood	1.4.38
Lytham St. Annes	1.4.38
Nelson	1.10.38
Urban Districts	
Dalton-in-Furness ..	1.4.38
Milnrow	1.4.38

Goole town council and **Felling** urban district council have passed the first resolution, and it is anticipated that the appointed day will be April 1 in both cases.

Consideration of an application made to the **Wakefield** finance committee for fixed allowances for non-contributory service has been deferred pending the issue of tables by the Ministry of Health relating to the cost of converting non-contributory into contributory service.

The following authorities have adopted superannuation schemes from April 1 :

	Officers	*Servants*
Holland C.C. ..	223	—
Coseley U.D.C. ..	26	63
Uttoxeter U.D.C. ..	11	13

The divisional secretary headed a deputation from N.A.L.G.O. and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers to the **Aberdare** U.D.C. to urge that a minimum of 80ths should be granted for non-contributory service.

Neath rural district council arranged a meeting of officers and workmen to discuss the adoption of a superannuation scheme, and invited the divisional secretary to outline the 1922 Act.

HERE AND THERE

They Say——

"Why not brighter local government? Citizens who do not attend council meetings do not know what they are missing. We should have strips of bright lighting on the Town Hall calling attention to the night's performance and the special attractions."—**Mr. W. Knell,** Northampton borough water engineer, at the annual dinner of the Northampton town and county branch.

"Tell Your Councillors"

"In many respects the local government officer has more responsibility than a manager in a private concern. No local government officer is worth his salt who blindly follows his councillors. He should have the courage to say courteously how, where, and why they are wrong."—**Councillor James Jackson,** chairman of Northampton public assistance committee, at the same dinner.

Local Government Films

"For two years N.A.L.G.O. has been discussing with a British cinema company the possibility of films to inform the public who pay rates what is happening to their money. Following an interview which I gave to a Sheffield paper, a director of the company approached me, and I think that, as a result, a film will be made of the work of local government." **Mr. W. W. Armitage,** the President, also at the Northampton dinner.

Responsibility Better than Power

"We are proud, not so much of our organisation, or of the personal gains we have obtained for our members, not so much for what people call our trades unionism, but for the impact we have made upon the standards of administration in this country. What has made N.A.L.G.O. such a force is that it sought to attain responsibility rather than power in public administration.—**Mr. L. Hill,** General Secretary, at the annual dinner of the New Forest branch.

Council Humour

"Absence of humour in council proceedings is responsible for apathy on the part of the public."—**Mr. Arthur Kent,** chief officer of the borough health department, at the annual dinner of the Stourbridge branch.

Helping the Junior

"Nalgo vigorously pursues a policy of encouraging and assisting the junior officer to take the highest professional qualifications in his particular calling and in this manner does much to improve the general standard of service."—**Mr. J. A. Packer,** chairman of the executive committee, at the annual dinner-dance of the Brighton branch.

This re-interpretation of the symbols of the Association's crest was given by speakers at the annual dinner and dance of the Maplethorpe and Sutton branch:

Top left—The morning tea-pot, standing on a few novels for reading in office hours;

Top right—A satisfied ratepayer;

Centre — An example of irregular building;

Bottom left—A summons; and

Bottom right—The office-boy weighing out the morning tea, with Mr. Therm waiting to boil the kettle.

N.A.L.G.O. TRAMPS' PARTY

Some branches are showing great ingenuity in arranging social events on novel lines. Particularly worthy of mention last month was the Tramp Supper organised by Enfield branch.

About 120 of the 170 guests came in clothes rescued from the rag-and-bone man. They sat at tables marked with "old-school" names—Dartmoor, Pentonville, Holloway, Narkover, Borstal—illuminated only by candles stuck in empty bottles, eating bread and cheese from scraps of newspaper, and singing popular "songs of the road."

* * *

Hornchurch branch, having heard too little of Acts of Parliament during the year, introduced one for their annual party. This included the following clauses:

No person shall be permitted to speak, maunder, orate, or hold converse with any member, present or not, at any time when the president is on his feet. Provided that this sub-section shall not apply in the event of the said president being on his feet otherwise than under his own power.

* * *

Discussion of "shop" is at all times forbidden, and no member shall at any time remind any guest other than a councillor of any sums being rates or other duly demanded liabilities which may or may not be due from such guest.

Hats Off to——

Mr. Daniel W. Herdman, F.L.A., borough librarian and curator at Cheltenham, for producing for the annual dinner of the Cheltenham Municipal Officers' Guild the most attractive menu card we have yet seen. The menu, based on the theme of "Harvest Home"—in tribute to the success of N.A.L.G.O.'s 30-year fight for superannuation—was embellished with delightful drawings of early drinking vessels in the Cheltenham museum, most of them personally collected by Mr. Herdman, and with appropriate quotations from west-country poets for the speakers.

Mablethorpe and Sutton branch for having, with only 15 members:

100 per cent membership of the council's office staff;

100 per cent membership of the B. & O. Fund; and

The highest percentage membership of the Provident Society in the East Midlands;

The Mayor of Brighton, **Councillor H. Hone,** J.P., for announcing at the annual dinner-dance of Brighton branch that, in response to a request from the branch secretary, he had agreed to call a meeting of representatives of local authorities in Surrey, Kent, and East and West Sussex to consider the expediency of forming a Provincial Whitley Council for the area.

Sleaford and Kesteven branch, for celebrating its first birthday with an annual dinner attended by 42 guests.

Tynemouth branch, for arranging a whist drive and dance attended by nearly 300 guests.

The officers of the **Waltham Holy Cross** U.D.C., on forming a branch of their own.

Wiltshire County branch, for raising £170 in the past six years by holding annual balls, and for giving £150 of this sum to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund.

Bury St. Edmunds branch, for having secured a 95 per cent membership, all members of the B. & O. Fund, three months after its formation.

Mr. H. Langford, hon. secretary of Essex county council branch, for reporting 92 applications for membership and foreshadowing a total membership of 1,000 by the time the Branch comes of age this year.

Godalming branch, for having an orchestra of members to provide the music at its first annual dinner and dance.

Lanchester sub-branch of Durham county branch, for handing the proceeds of its third annual whist drive and dance to the B. & O. Fund.

Featherstone branch, for having 100 per cent membership of the B. & O. Fund, and for having pledged itself to double the normal annual subscription this year.

Not a new idea– yet of special interest to you

Order your spring suit from me now and pay for it at your convenience

Yes, I have no doubt there are other tailors who would offer apparently similar terms—but consider these points. I am a CASH tailor, but I give credit to Public Officials because (as the insurance people say) they are "good risks"

Every piece of cloth and ready-to-wear suit in my shop has its cash price marked. So that's that. No catch-as-catch-can about it. I only charge 2½% extra for clerical expenses. One more point. I have been established over 37 years and (although I say it as shouldn't) I have a reputation for square dealing second to none

Call and see me to-day and discuss terms that will be agreeable to yourself

Lounge suits to measure or ready-to-wear

from 4½ guineas

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SCOTTISH NOTES

Whitley Council

THE most important event of the month was the meeting of the Whitley Council, at Glasgow, on February 2. The question of making general applications on salaries was discussed, and a satisfactory decision reached.

Discussing the grouping of local authorities, Mr. Archibald said that the staff side considered that grouping on a geographical basis was not practicable, but that the only rational and workable scheme was grouping according to population and valuation. Three groups of local authorities were suggested :

(1) The cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen, and the county of Lanark ;

(2) (a) Semi-industrial counties, *e.g.*, Aberdeen, Ayr, Dunbarton, Fife, Midlothian, Renfrew, Stirling and West Lothian ; and (b) the large burghs, *i.e.*, those with a population of over 20,000 ;

(3) The agricultural counties, small burghs and other small authorities.

Probably the very small burghs with a population of less than 7,000, of which there are many in Scotland, would not in practice be included in any of the groups, for in such burghs the officials are often part-time men who employ their own staffs or have no staffs. After much discussion, during which it was pointed out that Glasgow was in an exceptional position, the council agreed to make four groups, and asked the executive to place the various local authorities in one or other and to report back.

On the question of salary scales, Mr. Archibald, again speaking for the employees' side, suggested that the council should first fix minimum salaries for entrants to the service at age 16 ; for those who had finished their apprenticeship at age 21 ; and for those who had reached the marrying age, say 27. The council agreed and the suggestion was remitted to the executive to report.

A statement showing the salaries at present paid by a large number of local authorities to sanitary inspectors, was submitted, and referred to the executive to consider and make recommendations to the council for national scales.

A statement, also remitted to the executive for report, dealt with the salaries paid to whole-time registrars of births, deaths, and marriages, and their assistants.

The question of a scale for Dean of Guild Court Inspectors was considered, and it was pointed out that such officers were to be found only in the four cities, and that their conditions were not quite comparable. It was therefore suggested that the application from Edinburgh corporation to the council should be returned on the ground that the Dean of Guild Court Inspectors' case was local, rather than national, in character. Mr. Mortimer said that, while in the circumstances there was no objection to this being done, it was to be hoped that the representative of Edinburgh corporation would use his influence to have our application considered without further delay.

Nursing Staffs

During the past few weeks we have been actively engaged in the organisation of nursing staffs, particularly in the Glasgow area. We have held three meetings of nurses, with varying degrees of success, and we hope that before long we shall be able to report a considerable enrolment. Much time has been spent on the preparation of a memorandum for submission to the departmental committee on nursing appointed by the Secretary of State for Scotland. Later we shall probably give evidence to the committee.

Meetings

The **Ayrshire** executive held two meetings, to discuss the proposed new grading scheme. At the last meeting of the appropriate committee of the county council, Mr. Mortimer was instructed to appear at the next meeting in support of a better grading scheme for juniors.

Dundee executive discussed the proposed application to the town council for a revision of the grading scheme. A letter was read from the divisional secretary calling attention to the agreement made with the National Whitley Council not to make applications of a general nature to individual local authorities while the Whitley Council was considering the whole question of national scales, and in view of this it was agreed not to make the application.

Lanarkshire executive decided to lodge a number of applications regarding service conditions.

Week-end School

We are starting a new venture this year by holding an Easter week-end school. This will meet on the evening of Friday, April 15, at Ascog Hall, near Rothesay, and will continue until the following Monday morning. The inclusive charge for residence at Ascog Hall is £1. The principal speakers will be Bailie Hood, of Glasgow on "Education—Yesterday, To-day, and To-morrow," and Treasurer Morrison, of Aberdeen, on "Housing and Town Planning" As the accommodation is limited, those who wish to attend should communicate as early as possible with the secretary, Mr. J. M. Mortimer, 67, West Nile Street, Glasgow. There is no fee for enrolment.

Most Northerly Branch

In **Shetland,** the most northerly county in Britain, N.A.L.G.O. has now established an outpost—a branch, 35 members strong. Discussion on a grading scheme and on conditions for the clerical staff has already taken place, and the county council's consideration is to be invited.

OBITUARY

We regret to record the deaths of the following Lanarkshire members :

Mr. **James MacMillan,** late county water engineer ; Mr. **J. A. R. Liddell,** late public assistance officer, of Hamilton ; and Mr. **H. J. Luke,** of the county highways department.

HOW TO HELP

N. A. L. G. O. BENEVOLENT & ORPHAN FUND

CARRY-OFF THE TROPHY FOR YOUR DISTRICT

The three districts contributing the highest aggregate amount to the Fund will be awarded trophies

PREPARE FOR PROMOTION

The higher and more numerous your qualifications, the greater the salary you will be able to command. Why not prepare for promotion now? CHAMBERS COLLEGE founded in 1885 provides the finest and most up-to-date Home Preparation Courses for all Municipal and Civil Service Examinations, including:

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Sanitary Inspector (Joint Board)
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College of Preceptors (*which is accepted as educational qualification by Joint Board and carries exemption from most other Preliminary Examinations*).
L.C.C. Gen. & Major
A.R.S.I., M.R.S.I., M.I.H., etc.

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMS.

Clerical (age 16-17)
Executive (age 18-19)
Tax Inspector (age 21-24)
Patent Office (age 20-25)
G.P.O. Engineering (age 18-23)
Typist (age 16½-25)
Customs (age 19-21)
Board of Trade (age 20-24)
Police College (age 20-26)
Etc., Etc.

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THE ACID TEST OF TUTORIAL EFFICIENCY

SUCCESS—OR NO FEE

We definitely guarantee to get you through your chosen exam. If we fail to do so, then your tuition fee will be refunded in full. This remarkable guarantee is our indication of the complete confidence which we have in the suitability and efficiency of our courses and your definite safeguard against unsuitable and inferior tuition. Our Guarantee is most emphatically not a money-for-nothing arrangement. We require a fair remuneration for our services. This can only come through successful students. The obvious conclusion is that the number of unsuccessful students presented by us must be insignificant.

TYPICAL TESTIMONIALS.

SANITARY INSPECTION

*London, E.*17 (9.8.37).

"I am pleased to tell you that in 19 months I have been able to pass the Senior Certificate of the College of Preceptors and the Sanitary Inspector's Qualifying Certificate (London, 1937). I must thank you for the help you gave me in your two courses I took with you." (*Syd.*) *C.S.*

MEAT and FOOD INSPECTION

Wolverhampton (1.7.37).

"I wish to add my appreciation to your already well-known course in Meat and Food Inspection. I am very pleased to say that I was one of the sixteen successful candidates who passed last month at Birmingham, thanks to your course." (*Syd.*) *S. Reeves.*

COLLEGE OF PRECEPTORS

Liverpool (21.7.37).

"You will be pleased to know that I passed the senior examination of the College of Preceptors with distinctions in English and Mensuration." (*Syd.*) *A. C.*

INSTITUTE OF HYGIENE

Hendon (14.7.37).

"I have much pleasure in writing to let you know that I passed both my exams. at the Institute of Hygiene. It was no doubt due to the excellent teaching of your College." (*Sgd.*) *J. F.*

INDIAN POLICE

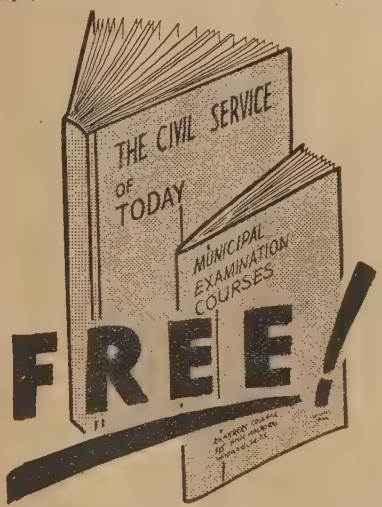
Maidstone (19.11.37).

"Your coaching was of great assistance to me last June when I sat for an examination at Burlington Gardens. I managed to pass this examination and was first man on the list for French." (*Sgd.*) *J. O'B.*

SUCCESSFUL AT R.O. EXAM.

Bury (6.8.37).

"I am very pleased to be able to inform you that I have been successful in obtaining the Relieving Officer's Certificate. The College course was, I am certain, responsible for my success which, to say the least, was surprising, taking into consideration the fact that I had not completed the course. (*Sgd.*) *H. R.*



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- ★ **All courses are prepared and students' work corrected by highly qualified experts with a wide experience of Municipal and Civil Service Examination requirements.**
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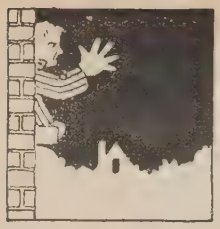


FROM MY BOOKSHELF

By Jonas Praps.

Their Own Stories

JOHANNES STEEL'S experiences are well worth while, but readers should not be deterred by the very sombre format of the book and complete lack of "appetite-wetting" illustrations, usual in such books. His earlier career was chiefly concerned with selling second-hand rifles in the Near East at considerable personal risk. Later he thrived largely on sabotage and espionage. The chief interest, however, in **"Escape to the Present"** (Cassell, 8s. 6d.) is the inside knowledge of recent German politics displayed by the writer. He knew most of the present leaders personally but declined to join the Nazi party. The book is a powerful indictment of Nazi methods and policy.

One can admire W. F. R. Macartney's frankness in **"Zigzag"**. (Gollancz, 12s. 6d.) more than his dealings in and with life. The book is his autobiography from childhood to the day of his sentence. Perhaps he was unfortunate in his upbringing—a father not too morally sound (so the author says) and constant moving from place to place in his younger days. He has met many interesting people and has much to say about war and politicians, eventually turning Communist and being convicted of an offence against the Official Secrets Act.

Far Away Yarns

Prospecting for gold was the primary object of Michael Leahy's journey into the interior of unexplored New Guinea, but the trip developed on the lines of serious exploration. Central New Guinea was believed to be an impenetrable mass of wild, rugged and mountainous expanses, but Mr. Leahy found vast tracts of inhabited country in the possession of savage pigmy tribes—men who fought and worked with primitive weapons and implements. He found, too, many strange adventures which are recorded in **"The Land That Time Forgot,"** by Michael J. Leahy and Maurice Crain (Hurst and Blackett, 12s. 6d.).

After these records of adventure **"Southward Ho!"** by Harold Nossiter (Witherby, 10s.6d.) reads like a trip Messrs. Cook might have arranged, but the picture of the yacht in which the author sailed from England to Australia might make you change your view. It is an account of a pleasant trip via the Panama Canal and the South Seas.

"Explorers' Club Tales: true stories of exploration, research and adventure as told at the Explorers' Club by men of daring and achievement" (Harrap, 10s. 6d.) is the title page description of some thirty adventurous incidents in many parts of the world.

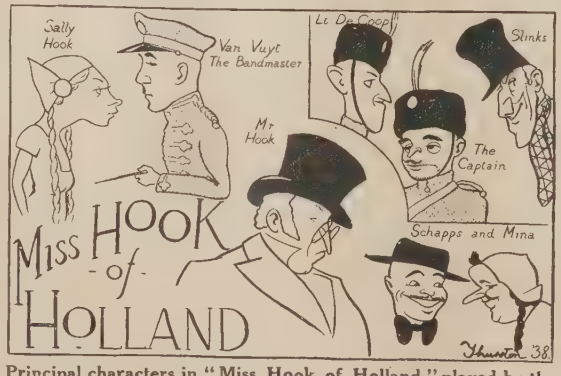
May we hope that Hodder and Stoughton's two-shilling reprints do not go the way of most cheap reprint series: the selection to date is excellent. Certainly Ronald Kaulback's **"Tibetan Track"** is well worth including. It is an enchanting volume full of good humour with vivid pictures of the joys, discomforts, pleasantries and adventures in that country of mysteries.

On the jacket of Miss Rosita Forbes's recent book, **"These Are Real People"** (Jenkins, 15s.) is a catalogue of this versatile lady's achievements: they are such that no mere man need have been ashamed of performing. In her new book she tells of some of the remarkable people she has met in her travels—not only politicians, potentates and Press men, but a Red Sea pirate, a Devil's Island convict and the like.

Stories

James T. Farrell has been hailed by the critics as one of the more noteworthy American novelists. **"Fellow Countrymen"** (Constable, 8s. 6d.) is a collection of his short stories grouped under headings as "God's Own Country," "Private Lives," etc. They illustrate phases of human existence in America to-day and are honest and frank.

A story centring round life in or associated with a National School is unusual. This is the main theme of **"I'm Not Complaining,"** by Ruth Adam (Chapman and Hall, 7s. 6d.). The plot is mainly concerned with four teachers, their loves, hopes, fears, disappointments and jealousies. The school is situated in a very poor quarter and the sinister influence of a shiftless family makes itself felt throughout the story.



Principal characters in "Miss Hook of Holland," played by the NALGO (Metropolitan District) Operatic and Dramatic Society, in aid of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund.

By Neville Hobson

THE fifth problem in the December competition was as follows:

South is endeavouring to make 3 No Trumps for Game. West holds the following, from which he leads a small Spade:

S. A, Q, 9, x, x. *D.* Q, x, x.
H. J, x. *C.* 10, 9, x.

In reply to this Spade lead, his partner East (who has not bid) plays the 10, and South wins with the Jack. South then plays the Ace of Diamonds, and follows with the King—his presumed object being to make the 4th Diamond in Dummy at a later stage (Dummy holding Diamonds 10, x, x, x and one card of entry).

What should West play on South's second lead of the King of Diamonds?

Answer: Queen of Diamonds.

If West retains the Queen and wins with it, he must then lead away from his Spade suit, as his partner, East, has shown he does not possess the King, which is obviously held by South.

Unless, therefore, East has the Knave of Diamonds and is allowed to win with it, the Spades will probably not be established and South is fairly certain to make the required 3 No Trumps for Game. The mere fact that this play might produce extra tricks for South (in the event of East not having the Jack of Diamonds) is not sufficient to justify any other play by West but the Queen.

Probably the most difficult phase of both Auction and Contract Bridge is the play of the hands in defence. The Declarer has the great advantage of knowing all the cards out against him, whereas each defender knows his own and Dummy's, but it is not easy for him to place certain of the remaining cards as between the Declarer and his partner. Numerous games and rubbers are made as the result of faulty defence, which is not realised.

The above hand affords a good illustration of this, as most players would keep their Queen of Diamonds and then regard it as "bad luck" that the Declarer should make game through holding a second stop in Spades.

Other instances of successful defence arise from the leading of Trumps by the opening player against hands, the bidding of which suggest long and short suits. The moment cross ruffing is suggested by the bidding, the defenders should consider leading Trumps, as this is often the only way of defeating the Contract. Indeed, nothing is more exasperating than to see a moderate Dummy make two small trumps on losing cards in the Declarer's hand, and the lead of a Trump in certain types of distribution is often the best defence. When in doubt as to what to lead, ask yourself: "What is likely to do the least harm?"

N.A.L.G.O.'s Two Rugby Internationals.

.A.L.G.O. is achieving international e in the Rugby football world. Two nbers of the Association are members ie Welsh International team—**Clifford es**, of the clerks' department, morgan county council, who is captain stand-off half, and **W. H. Clement,** Llanelly corporation, who is wing e-quarter.

liff Jones, who is articled to Mr. J. Parry, N.E.C., the Association's orary solicitor for Wales, is probably most popular sportsman in South les to-day. He has been in the Rugby elight since his early 'teens, when he yed for Llandovery College. On going Cambridge, he obtained his blue in his t year.

Cliff Jones.

W. H. Clement.

W. H. Clement, who has represented ales with distinction in her last five ternational matches and is likely, rring accidents, to take part in many ore, is a native of Llanelly and a oduct of the Llanelly County School ugby Club. After a season with a local nior side he found his way, in 1935, to the Llanelly premier fifteen. R. W.

Metropolitan Ice Skating

The ice-skating section of the Metropolitan district having already over a housand members enjoys special facili-es at most London rinks.

In December 1,450 members and riends visited the ice-revue "Marina" t Earls Court, and on several occasions n ice-rink has been taken for special ractice sessions.

Particulars may be obtained from J. P. . Branson, Town Hall, Kensington, W.8.

Wilts County branch, which had for ears tried to organise a football section with little success, achieved a triumph ecently, when, in the semi-final tie in the knock-out competition for a trophy presented by Mr. Newman of Exeter, played at Trowbridge, it defeated the Bristol county borough branch by twelve goals to nil. Players and spectators agree that the score was really thirteen, and it is thought that the referee was superstitious.

N.A.L.G.O. HOLIDAYS

Paris and Riviera

THE programme for Easter holidays in Paris and Mentone (French Riviera) is now available for those members who wish to join the N.A.L.G.O. parties. Intending visitors to Paris for Easter are urged to book their accommodation at once, as many bookings are expected. The charges are :

Paris.

4 days from £5 17s. 9d.
5 ,, ,, £6 10s. 3d.
6 ,, ,, £6 12s. 9d.

Including :

2nd class rail in England and France.
1st class boat.
Hotel accommodation in Paris.
Half-day excursion in Paris.
Half-day excursion to Versailles.
Free transfer between station and hotel and vice-versa.
Reserved compartments for members.
Services of N.A.L.G.O. official.

The hotels at which accommodation will be reserved have been personally inspected and approved by a headquarters official, who has paid special attention to the comfort and convenience of N.A.L.G.O. visitors.

Mentone :

By these new arrangements N.A.L.G.O. brings a holiday in the Riviera within the reach of a large number of members hitherto unable to meet the expense.

The cost of nine days is from **£12 12s. 6d.**, and for sixteen days from **£16 9s. 0d.** This includes :

Second class travel London to Riviera and return, including 1st class boat ;
Accommodation at selected hotels ;
Hotel gratuities and taxes ;
Services of French hotel plan representatives on the Riviera and at Paris, and N.A.L.G.O. official to Paris ;
Conveyance of passengers' hand baggage;
Season ticket on motor coaches for an unlimited number of journeys between Nice, St. Jean, Cap Ferrat, Villefranche, Beaulieu, Monaco, Monte Carlo, Cap Martin, Roquebrune, Mentone, Garavan, and Sospel ;
Season ticket to Casino, concerts, dances and cinema ;
Admission to the world-famous aquarium at Monaco ;
Admission to the exotic tropical gardens at Monte Carlo ;
Motor coach excursion to Alassio on the Italian Riviera.

YOU WILL BE HAPPIER WITH A N.A.L.G.O. PARTY.

I am interested in arrangements made by N.A.L.G.O. for Holidays in

SWITZERLAND
FRANCE

Please send me the Summer Programme, 1938, when available.

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

To N.A.L.G.O. (Special Activities Dept.), 24, Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1. (½d. *postage only required.*)

Diploma in Public Administration

The examination for the London Univ. D.P.A. can now be taken by candidates who (1) have passed or obtained exemption from London Matriculation ; or (2) have obtained a School Certificate or some recognised equivalent qualification *and* have for two years held an approved appointment in a Public Office. Attendance at University classes is not necessary ; candidates can prepare for the exam. at home in their leisure hours. The Diploma is increasing in importance as a qualification for those engaged in local government service.

WOLSEY HALL POSTAL COURSES

Wolsey Hall prepares candidates for D.P.A. Examinations by means of up-to-date postal courses drawn up and individually conducted by highly qualified graduate tutors. A Guarantee is given that in the event of failure tuition will be continued *free of charge*. N.B.—At the 1937 External examination 86% of Wolsey Hall candidates passed forming nearly one-third of the Pass List.

FREE PROSPECTUS

and full particulars from Director of Studies, Dept. RH28, Wolsey Hall, Oxford.

STOMACH PAINS FOR YEARS

Can eat anything now—and why

If you have begun to suffer from Indigestion or any other stomach trouble, you are fortunate to be reading this. Mrs. W., of Trowbridge, wasn't so fortunate. She suffered for years before she heard of Maclean Brand Stomach Powder. "I was afraid to eat and was losing weight," her letter goes on. "I tried almost everything, but nothing did any good. Then I got a bottle of Maclean Brand Stomach Tablets and took one after every meal. I have never had a pain since. I can eat anything now and have gained 6 lbs. in weight."

Whether your stomach trouble is old or new, severe or slight, waste no time in getting this splendid remedy. Maclean Brand Stomach Powder is swift, sure and absolutely safe. It doesn't just "kill" pain. It gets right down and removes the cause in a perfectly natural way! Inflamed stomach walls are soothed, excess acid banished, noxious gases expelled. Your stomach is made clean and fresh. Soon it is working normally again.

But—do not accept an inferior substitute. Ask for MACLEAN BRAND Stomach Powder, which is genuine only if the signature "ALEX. C. MACLEAN" appears on bottle and carton. Powder or Tablets, 1/3, 2/- and 5/-; or handy pocket tins of Tablets at 9d. Never sold loose.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION EXAMINATIONS

are held in June and December. For Syllabus and application forms, apply **The Secretary, Corporation of Certified Secretaries, 30 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1**

Insurance for the Motorist

IN the spring of 1937, a member of N.A.L.G.O. wrote to its Insurance Department :

"If I had only known of the N.A.L.G.O. Motor Scheme a month ago I would have saved myself £3 on the premium for my Motor Insurance . . ."

At this time of the year many members are contemplating the purchase of a motor car and, although they are usually most careful in studying the various makes of car, they often overlook the important matter of insurance, effecting it through whatever company the dealer suggests.

Not only are the N.A.L.G.O. motor premiums much lower than those generally obtainable but the policies give many benefits which are wider in scope than those usually given, or for which an extra premium is chargeable under other policies. For example, in the case of the car policy there is a cumulative no claim bonus which increases from 20 per cent at the end of the first year free of claim to a maximum of 33⅓ per cent. The bonus under the motor cycle policy is 20 per cent, compared with the customary 10 per cent.

Private car policies cover medical expenses up to 25 gns. in respect of each passenger injured in an accident, and provide for the assured and his wife capital benefits ranging from £500 to £1,000 in the event of death or loss of limbs Other policies pay these benefits, but medical expenses are as a rule limited to 10 gns. per person, and personal accident benefits, for which lower sums are payable, are provided for the assured alone. The policy covers loss of or damage to rugs, motor coats and trunks or travelling cases containing wearing apparel. A considerable extra charge is usually made for this cover, which is included free in the N.A.L.G.O. policy.

There is also an "agreed value" clause which is of great advantage to the assured. Most policies are subject to the "market value" clause which limits the payment for total loss to the market value of the vehicle at the time of loss. In the N.A.L.G.O. policy the value is agreed beforehand and is paid in full in the event of a total loss. The policy also indemnifies the assured up to £250 in any year against costs involved in defending charges of manslaughter which may be brought against him. Many policies do not give this benefit.

An extension of the policy to permit use of the car for official purposes and to indemnify the local authority against third party risks can be secured without additional premium.

N.A.L.G.O. policies are issued by a syndicate of Lloyds underwriters, and claims are settled promptly and generously. The official insurance brokers, Norman Frizzell & Partners Ltd., of 52-54, Gracechurch Street, London, E.C.3 and 20, Chapel Street, Liverpool, will readily answer inquiries, and members interested should apply to them.

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the car or motor-cycle
for which you've waited
by means of its
MOTOR HIRE
PURCHASE
SCHEME
STRICT
★ Privacy is ★
ASSURED
TRANSACTIONS
can be completed
IN 48 HOURS
WRITE FOR FURTHER DETAILS
To N.A.L.G.O., 24 ABINGDON STREET, S.W.1.
I am interested in the purchase of a NEW MOTOR CAR, the LIST PRICE of which is
£.....
Repayment to be made over a period of * 12 months * 18 months * 24 months
NAME.....
ADDRESS.....
* Delete where not required .*. post open envelope, ½d.

District Committees

East Midland

A POWERFUL appeal for increased support for the Benevolent and Orphan Fund was made by Colonel E. J. Stead, junior vice-president of the Association, at the 28th annual meeting of the East Midland District Committee, at Nottingham. Mr. H. S. Sherwin (Nottingham) presided.

The income of the Fund, said Col. Stead, was giving the Council great anxiety. Expenditure had been increased this year because the Council, realising that widows dependent upon the fund had, as a result of the rising cost of living, barely enough for the necessities of life, had increased grants on the average by 5s. a week.

It was resolved to make grants up to £30 to small branches to attend the annual conference and to students attending the Association's summer schools.

The divisional secretary reported that :

A new branch had been formed by the officers of the Spalding urban and rural district councils ;

Two authorities had adopted the 1922 Superannuation Act ;

New or revised salary scales had been adopted by two authorities ;

Two others had graded women officers ; and

A joint committee had been established by one authority.

The annual report recorded that :

New or revised scales had been adopted by five authorities ;

The reinstatement of two suspended officers had been secured ;

Negotiations on general service conditions or in the interests of individual members had been successful ;

Fifteen authorities had adopted superannuation schemes ; and

Legal aid had been given to five members.

Mr. E. Robins, deputy town clerk of Leicester, was appointed chairman, and Mr. W. M. Morley, Derby, vice-chairman.

West Midland

The formation of five new branches was reported at the annual meeting of the West Midland district committee, at Birmingham. Mr. H. Taylor, deputy town clerk of Stoke-on-Trent, presided. The annual report disclosed that :

Six authorities had adopted revised scales of salaries ;

Two had approved graded scales of annual holiday ; and

Three had adopted the 1922 Superannuation Act.

The divisional secretary reported that :

A new branch had been formed by the officials of the Alsager, Biddulph, and Kidsgrove urban district councils ;

Three authorities had adopted the 1922 Superannuation Act ;

Five had adopted new or revised salary scales.

The executive committee reported that it had appointed a sub-committee to investigate salaries and service conditions in the area.

Mr. H. Taylor was re-elected chairman, and Mr. G. A. Owen, vice-chairman.

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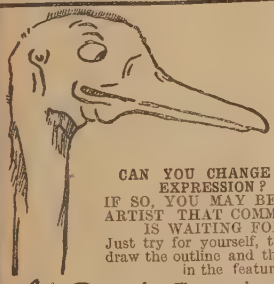

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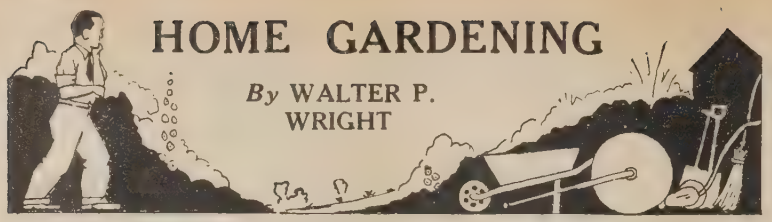

HOME GARDENING

By WALTER P. WRIGHT

IN returning to the ever-interesting subject of grass I may safely suggest that many of my readers are interested in it, not only as amateur gardeners, but also as golf, tennis or bowls players, and in that capacity are apt now and then to level criticism at their green-keepers —a class that probably gets more or less hardened to admonition from persons who have missed "putts," muffed "volleys," or twirled "woods" in the wrong direction.

But greenkeepers and amateur gardeners alike believe in laying turf on a base of sand or ashes rather than on soil.

Why ashes? To assist in drainage mainly, but the gritty stuff is also credited with suppressing worms, which it does not do half so well as mowrah meal and dried and powdered husks of unripe walnuts.

Best Base for Turf

Why sand? By repute, it is the best base for turf, but an accepted authority in the person of the Hastings Superintendent of Public Parks roundly declares that a better base for turf than either ashes or sand is loam and coarse river sand in equal parts with ½-cwt. of granulated peat and ¼-cwt. bone meal per cubic yard of the mixture, the whole passed through a ¼-inch screen. I am whole-heartedly with him, for such a compost must certainly make subsequent feeding less onerous than either sand or ashes.

But the greenkeeper, and perhaps even the amateur gardener who is anxious to get a lawn approximating in fineness to Cumberland or other sea-washed turf, may inquire whether it is possible to achieve equal success from local turf. Here steps in another parks superintendent, who states emphatically that any decent local meadow turf can be made equally good with a proper base at laying time and proper treatment afterwards.

Cutting and Rolling "Don'ts"

He and other authorities of his class deprecate mowing very closely at weekly intervals, preferring a somewhat higher cut made two or even three times a week in the growing season. They likewise oppose repeated heavy rolling on stiff soil, on the ground that it tends to "bind" the turf, especially while it is wet. This is true. It does bind the turf, necessitating much pricking with fork or other implement to maintain the necessary openness.

Readers who wish to lay turf should get on with the job speedily, lest a spell of hot weather make April laying unsafe. And think of the basal materials mentioned above.

If the surface of garden (not games) turf is soft, beware of repeated rollings with a heavy roller. Rather, get a fork and prick over the whole of the surface a good four inches deep, afterwards spreading on a mixture of sand and coke breeze at the minimum rate of ½ cwt. per square rod.

If you have a lot of moss in the grass, scratch the patches well with a rake and sprinkle on fine charcoal freely sowing seed with fresh soil later on—preferably early in April. Do not stint seed. Two oz. per square yard is not excessive.

I shall deal with other points about turf later.

I discussed general garden manuring in the autumn. But many readers may not have their gardens already dug and manured. Where this often tiresome matter still needs attention, I suggest experimenting with hop manures. There are two particularly popular kinds—Wakeley's and Abol—and I gave both a thorough trial last year with most encouraging results. They can be bought in bags containing 7 lb. upward.

Broadly, Wakeley's is a moist and Abol a dry preparation. In merit and cost there is probably little to choose between them, and where immediate use is in contemplation one will do as well as the other. In both cases analyses are supplied and suitable quantities for various crops recommended.

A Reliable Fertiliser

I must also remind readers of my old and well-tried mixture of so-called "artificial" fertilisers:

Three parts by weight of superphosphate of lime (30 to 35 per cent. grade.)

One part each of steamed bone flour, sulphate of potash, and sulphate of ammonia.

Mix thoroughly and use 4 to 6 lb. per square rod. With poor soils both hop manure and chemical manures should be used.

Seedlings resulting from early sowings can be pricked out soon, not forgetting Dahlias and Snapdragons. In mild places it may be practicable to sow hardy annuals outdoors from the middle to the end of the month.

The last of the Roses, dwarf and rambler alike, should be got in soon, but pruning should be delayed until the end of the month.

Sweet Peas in frames have probably been topped and are breaking nicely. Such plants can be put out soon, and a first outdoor sowing made as soon as the conditions are favourable.

Most kinds of Alpine plants can be put in the rockery now. Herbaceous borders can be overhauled, old shoots being removed and the ground forked over and manured.

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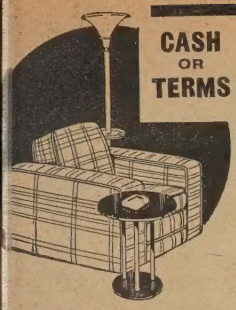

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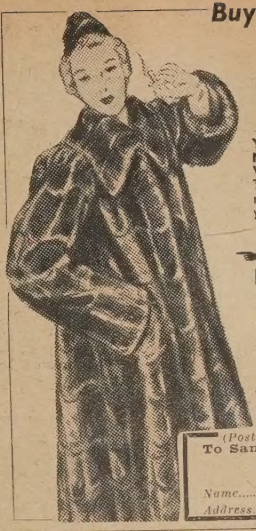

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Summer Schools for 1938

e Association is arranging for three ner Schools this year :

otland.—At St. Andrews University, June 18 to 25. Students will be nmodated at St. Salvator's Hall. ures will be delivered by Professor r, of the Chair of Economics, deen University, and Dr. Pryde, rer in Scottish history, Glasgow ersity. Fees, 9s. 6d. a day.

gland and Wales.—At the Uni- ty College of North Wales, Bangor, July 16 to 23. The lectures will with the history of local government, g the background of modern ad- stration, present-day problems, the al authority, the local authority and community, and public relations, ding the relationship between the payer and the local government er. They will be delivered by Dr. Jennings, M.A., LL.B., LL.D., ister-at-law, Reader in English Law he University of London; Mr. T. S. ey, M.A., Lecturer in Public inistration at the University of rpool; and Mr. James Taylor, A.P.A., City Development Officer, entry. Fees, 12s. 6d. a day.

erlin.—At the Kommunalwissen- ftliches Institut at Berlin University, a June 25 to July 2. The lectures, vered by eminent authorities in lish, will deal with the development ublic administration in Germany and changes in local government since 5; the duties and functions of the German communes; the economic services of the communes; educational services; unemployment relief; town planning, housing, streets and highways, and the administration of the city of Berlin. Fees, £9 for the week, inclusive of accommodation, meals and travelling expenses.

PARIS LECTURE NOTES

Notes on the lectures delivered at the Paris Summer School, 1937, and on the visits to local government establishments, have now been printed and are on sale price 1s. per copy.

A few copies of the notes on the lectures at the Oxford Summer School, 1937, are also available at the same price.

The Summer Schools booklet, giving full details of the schools, will be available early in April.

Scholarships Offered

The Southern district committee offers £15 for two scholarships to assist students in attending one of the Association's summer schools. The scholarships will be awarded on the results of essays on prescribed subjects. Members of the Southern district should ask their branch secretaries for particulars, and are urged to avail themselves of this opportunity of assistance and of spending an enjoyable week at one of the summer schools.

WEEK-END SCHOOLS

The following week-end schools have been arranged :

Eastern Districts. — At Magdalene College, Cambridge. On March 19 and 20. Maximum number 30. Fee 15s. inclusive, but rebates and grants towards travelling expenses can be made in approved cases.

North-Western.—On April 2 and 3 at the N.A.L.G.O. private hotel, Cefn y Mynach, Rhos-on-Sea, arranged jointly by the Liverpool, Manchester and District, Chester and North Wales area education committees.

Full details may be obtained from branch education correspondents.

Local Government Examinations

A list of examinations applicable to various departments of local administration has been compiled by the Association. Copies may be obtained from headquarters.

PLANNING FOR HEALTH

There is much to interest local authorities and their officers in the Health, Sport and Fitness Exhibition, arranged by the Royal Institute of British Architects, which opens at the Institute's headquarters, 66, Portland Place, London, W.1, on March 2.

The central feature is a model, 13 ft. by 10 ft., of the ideal sports centre for a town of 100,000 inhabitants.

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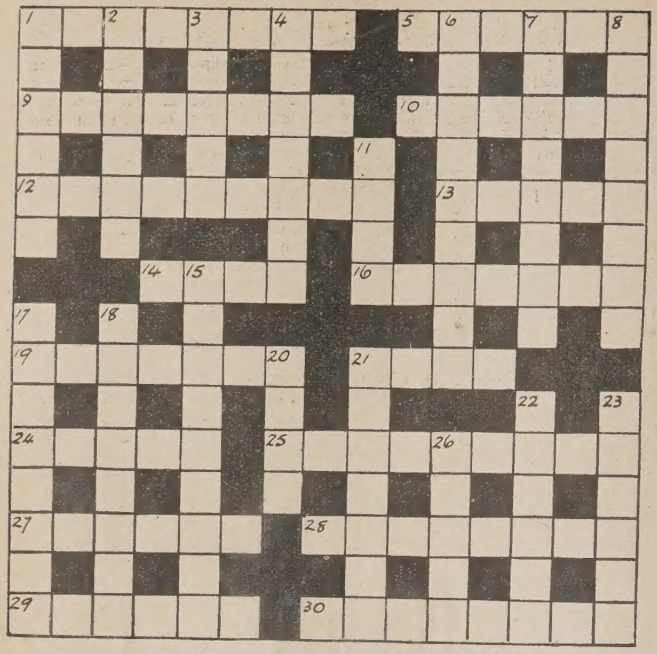

ACROSS :

1. This member of a local authority has his emblem of office round a broken limb.
5. From attics to stable.
9. It is hygienic to speak about upset train.
10. Rats!
12. The monkey just gets in this picture.
13. This clue sounds as if it is not a good one.
14. Drop a penny to get amusement?
16. Does this person wait on a insect?
19. "Nice fad" (anagram).
21. Divide.
24. A girl starts to escape.
25. Good citizens cross here.
27. Does Sambo hate the cricket match?
28. This shelter would be 23 down in 4 down.
29. Useless as a water-carrier.
30. A complete change.

DOWN :

1. A council house may be a Englishman's this.
2. This may be waning.
3. Mixed weeds.
4. Look up for this.
6. This official's end is mor than certain.
7. Bone in the head.
8. Penitent.
11. Faulty services.
15. "Sun a liver" (anagram).
17. The Cockney's unchivalrou advice for the culprit.
18. Evidently not 19 across.
20. Consider.
21. This accounts for audit.
22. Epithet for a leaky roof.
23. See 28 across.
26. Headwear.

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C	A	U	S	E		A	T	E		S		A
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